00031734

God.
954.03
Kha/Lor
31734

THE

ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY

Town Hall, Bombay.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Digitized with financial assistance from

NSDL
Technology, Trust & Reach

on 16 November, 2018

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

LORD CURZON'S ADMINISTRATION OF INDIA:

31734 of

WHAT HE PROMISED; WHAT HE PERFORMED.

By

SYED SIRDAR ALI KHAN

Of Hyderabad (Deccan).

All rights reserved.

BOMBAY:

PRINTED AT THE TIMES PRESS,

1905.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

PREFACE.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

I feel great diffidence in asking Your Excellency to accept this little book, which attempts a very imperfect review (by a Mahomedan) of the administration of the last seven years; but when I recently saw an accusation made in some Bengal and Lucknow newspapers, that Your Excellency was wanting in *sympathy* for the people, I felt myself compelled to publish what I believe to be the feelings of the great majority of the people of India, and, most emphatically of those with whom I have been associated.

In the belief that what is said in the following pages represents a sincere though perhaps inadequate appreciation of Your Excellency's administration, and in the hope that Your Excellency will not leave India under the impression that the great majority of the Indian peoples, and Mahomedans especially, are guilty of ingratitude.

I subscribe myself,

with great respect,

Your Excellency's most humble servant,

SYED SIRDAR ALI KHAN.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

CONTENTS.

		PAGE
CHAPTER	I.—Introduction.	1
,,	II.—Lord Curzon's Preparation. ...	10
,,	III.—India's place in the Empire, and the Frontier Policy.	22
,,	IV.—Internal Affairs—Berar, Bengal; Plague and Famine; Crime. ...	34
,,	V.—Trade and Revenue—Railways—Taxation.	46
,,	VI.—Police Reform and Education. ...	61
,,	VII.—Other Reforms—Irrigation and Agricultural Problems; Currency; Ancient Buildings; Indian Arts Exhibition and Archæology.	87
,,	VIII.—Delhi Durbar and Victoria Memorial; Reforms in the Transfer and Leave Rules; Orders regarding Report Writing; "Efficiency"; Agricultural Indebtedness and Telegraph Rates.	102
,,	IX.—Conclusion.	112

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

A hundred years ago a great Governor-General left India under circumstances somewhat similar to those under which another, even greater Viceroy and Governor-General, is now leaving. I use the comparative degree, because the conquests of the Marquess of Wellesley were those of War, whilst the victories achieved by Lord Curzon have been those of Peace. The first five years of the great Marquess' term of office were distinguished by a series of brilliant victories which filled the whole of India with admiration and fear. A further extension of office was granted to him in order that he might finish what he had so gloriously commenced, but at its very commencement there occurred a temporary check, which so filled the Directors in England with alarm that they suddenly recalled the man who had been the first to consolidate the scattered portions of the British Empire in India, and to bring them, as it were,

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

into a ring-fence. In a similar way the first years of Lord Curzon's office produced a series of brilliant peaceful triumphs, in spite of such potent enemies as Plague and Famine. To use his own words, almost every department in India was placed on the anvil and there tested, and, wherever a flaw was discovered, a remedy was applied. To the memory of the beloved Empress, who had passed to her well-earned rest, he commenced the erection of a monument which, when finished, will rank with the stately edifices not only of India but of the world; and to commemorate the accession of her revered son, our present Emperor, he held one of the most gorgeous pageants that even this country, accustomed as it had been to the magnificence of its rulers, has ever seen. To Lord Curzon was also given an extension to enable him to complete what he had so brilliantly commenced, and then, only a few short months after his return, a crisis occurred which compelled him to lay down his office, his task still uncompleted, rather than be the instrument of carrying out a policy which he deemed to be unconstitutional and opposed to the true interests of the country. In other words, he sacrificed himself and his ambitions on the altar of duty.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

It would be absurd for me to say that Lord Curzon leaves India a popular man. It is impossible that a reformer of his stamp could be popular. I believe it was Lord Beaconsfield who once said : "Show me a popular Viceroy and I will show you a weak one." But, popular or unpopular, I think that I am merely voicing the opinion of the whole of India, of his friends as well as of his enemies, when I say that he leaves amidst a general feeling of sympathy for a career so suddenly cut short, of approval for his having maintained his self-respect even at the sacrifice of office, and of admiration of the brilliant talents he has displayed and of the devotion he has shown to work. Shall I be deemed impertinent if I venture to hint that in these respects Lord Curzon's conduct shows a very marked contrast to that of the Home Government which has been the direct cause of his return ?

It is not my wish to enter into the arena of controversy, but in giving a short summary of Lord Curzon's administration, I wish to point out how far he has fulfilled the promises that he held out at the commencement of his term of office and for what special acts he deserves to be remembered

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

with gratitude by the Indian community in general and by the Mahomedans in particular.

1. *Lord Curzon's personality.*—There is, I think, no instance on record of an Indian Viceroy having shown such a desire to bring himself into personal contact with every branch of the administration, with every province, and with every race and denomination of the three hundred millions over whom he has held supreme control. He has visited every portion of this large Peninsula and made the personal acquaintance of almost every Prince and Chief. Plague or famine, heat or rain, have not kept him back, and wherever he has gone he has shown to the people the personal interest which he takes in their affairs and in their welfare. In one of his earlier speeches he said that he wished, as far as possible, to associate the Chiefs of the different States with himself in the government of the country, and this he has most certainly done. It may safely be said that in every independent State that he has visited, Lord Curzon has left behind him a devoted adherent and an attached friend. In every town that he has halted at, he has left the impress of his individuality, some word or some action for which he will be remembered in

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

after years. But this stamp of an individuality has been left not only upon persons but upon affairs. Dr. Johnson's epitaph on Goldsmith, when translated, runs: "There is nothing that he touched that he did not adorn." Of Lord Curzon it might well be said: "He touched everything and upon everything he left his mark." Upon every question he formed an independent judgment of his own, and no one could complain that the supreme ruler of the State had not given his affairs full and ample consideration. And this is the kind of ruler best suited to an oriental people. We natives of India are loyal at heart to the decisions of our rulers. What we want to be sure of is that our case has been fully gone into and has been decided upon its merits. Of course, I am aware that there are many now-a-days who will not take "no" for an answer, and, disregarding all reason and all argument, will insist that their view is the right one. No doubt the number of these persons is yearly increasing, but they do not represent the vast body of Indians, whether Hindus, Mahomedans or Parsis. What, in my opinion, has tended most to enlist the sympathies of most men towards Lord Curzon's administration is that for whatever he did he always gave good reasons. Every argument

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

was noticed and answered. Not always favourably, that of course it is impossible to expect, but during the last seven years we have all been witnesses of the fact that our Viceroy condescended to argue with us even on questions of the very highest policy. I will take one instance from many others that could be cited. In December 1900 a number of retired Government officials, all of whom had held high and honourable positions in the Government services, addressed a memorial to the Viceroy through the Secretary of State regarding the relation of famines to the incidence of revenue upon the ryots. In this memorial assertions were made and suggestions offered which seemed reasonable. Lord Curzon at once met the memorial in the proper way. He referred it to every Provincial Government for report. Less he might have done; more he could not do. On the exhaustive reports that followed, he gave a final decision in which he showed conclusively that loss from famine had nothing whatsoever to do with the incidence of taxation, that the unanimous reports from the various Governments showed that the recommendation of the memorialists had already been anticipated, and finally laid down specific and liberal rules for future settlements, which left

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

no possible doubt as to what the wishes of the Government of India were. With the subsequent discussion, in which Mr. Romesh C. Dutt, C.I.E., has been a prominent mover, I have nothing to do. I am not an expert, nor am I personally interested in agricultural questions. The point I wish to make is that on receipt of a memorial from private individuals, putting forward an ostensible grievance, Lord Curzon at once made it a subject of official enquiry, and upon receipt of the different reports himself drew up the reply. Every sentence of that long and dignified answer bears the mark of the Viceroy's personality, and it was altogether of so crushing a nature that the memorialists, with one exception, that of Mr. R. C. Dutt, have not ventured to re-open the attack. Lord Curzon showed conclusively that the incidence of taxation is not the cause of famine; that the permanent settlement in Bengal is not the cause of that Province's comparative immunity; that the tendency of the Government has been towards the reduction and not towards the increase of taxation; that most of the suggestions made by the memorialists had already been anticipated, and finally laid down such broad and liberal principles for future settlements as can leave no possible

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

room for complaints of this kind in time to come. Into the merits of this controversy I do not propose to enter, and I have only alluded to it in order to show how ready Lord Curzon has shown himself to meet his opponents on their own ground and to make their grievances the subject of a searching enquiry. Nor am I alone in this estimate of Lord Curzon's accessibility. I take this opportunity of quoting from a speech of one of the most enlightened of our Hindu princes. "We have never had a Viceroy so anxious to learn the real wishes of the children of the soil, so scrupulous in giving a patient hearing to their grievances, so full of schemes, for the development of the Empire, so firmly resolved to leave India, at the conclusion of his term of office, a better, more contented, and a more prosperous country than he found it." If other proof were needed of the appreciation of the people of Lord Curzon's interest in their welfare, it would be found in the hundreds of telegrams that have poured in upon him from all quarters since the news of his retirement has been published. Cynics may perhaps sneer at these messages of sympathy as being merely evidence of an Oriental desire to please and to find favour in the eyes of a great man. I

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

have little doubt that I too may be made the subject of such a reproach, but I would point out that this homage has been paid not to the rising, but to the setting, sun, from which no future marks of favour can be expected. No! these expressions of sympathy are spontaneous and sincere, and are a proof of how deeply the departing Viceroy has left the impress of his individuality upon the great mass of the people he has ruled for the last seven years.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

CHAPTER II.

LORD CURZON'S PREPARATION.

FEW Viceroys have gone through so thorough a preparation for the high post as Lord Curzon. First of all at Eton, and afterwards at Balliol, he stood in the front rank of the new generation. He was not satisfied with taking a high degree, but he was a double prize-man and eventually a Fellow of All Souls. He was one of the most prominent members of the Union Debating Club, of which, in course of time, he became President. After leaving the University he commenced a long series of travels in the East, visiting Central Asia, Persia, Afghanistan, the Pamirs, Siam, Indo-China and Korea. Here he acquired a knowledge of Eastern countries and people, which has been possessed by no previous Viceroy. At the age of 29 he published his first book "Russia in Central Asia," which met with such success that the *London Times* sent him in the same year as its correspondent to Persia. The book, which

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

was the result of this journey and which was published three years later, has now become a classic. It was at this time that he studied the conditions of the Persian Gulf and of the various questions which are so intimately connected with India and so vitally affect her future. He became personally acquainted with the Shah of Persia, and afterwards with the late Amir of Afghanistan, Abdul Rahman Khan. The latter Prince gives an interesting sketch of the future Viceroy in his autobiography and appears to have been greatly struck by "the very genial, hard-working, well-informed, experienced, and ambitious young man." In this one sentence the Amir has put his finger upon the predominant points of Lord Curzon's character, and it shows what a shrewd observant man the late Amir was. The visit was, of course, an unofficial one, but Amir Abdul Rahman Khan says that he discussed with his guest all the important affairs of his Government and especially the north-west frontier of Afghanistan and his successor to the throne. It was the experience gained from so important an authority that induced Lord Curzon to afterwards form the new frontier Province and to send the Dane Mission to Amir Abdul Rahman's successor. In the meantime Lord

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Curzon had entered Parliament, where, as in every other position, he at once made his mark. His first appointment was that of Assistant Private Secretary to Lord Salisbury, after which he became Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He thus gained an experience not only of Indian questions but of the complicated politics of Europe and of the world generally. I have now arrived at the time when Lord Curzon was appointed Viceroy of India. He had for 12 years been a member of Parliament, and brilliant though his career had been, this appointment took every one by surprise. But the then Premier of England was a keen judge of men. He had been in a position to recognise the qualifications of his former Private Secretary, and in spite of his comparative youth, or perhaps rather because of it, he saw in him a fit representative of the Empress of India, and one possessed of the ability, the youth and the energy to promote the imperialistic ideas which have formed the distinguishing mark of the great party that has been at the Head of the British Government for the last 10 years. The British public was not slow to recognise the wisdom of this choice. The ruling spirits of the politics of the day were mostly young men and

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

this was especially the case in India. Of these young men Lord Curzon had undoubtedly the most brilliant reputation, and what more fitting man could be found to sway the destinies of the great Indian Empire? Probably few Viceroys have left England amidst so universal a chorus of congratulations. At a dinner given to him before he left London by his old Etonian school-fellows he quoted the words of Carlyle, which applied with singular felicity to himself: "I have sometimes thought what a thing it would be could the Queen in Council pick out some gallant-minded, stout cadet, and say to him, 'Young fellow, if these do lie in your potentialities of governing, of gradually guiding, leading and coercing to a noble goal, how sad it is they should be all lost. See I have scores on scores of colonies. One of these you shall have as Vice-king. Go you and buckle with it in the name of Heaven, and let us see what you will build it to.'"* In this same speech Lord Curzon gave to his hearers his conception of what a Viceroy should be and at the same time sketched out a programme of the work he had set himself to accomplish.

* I am indebted to Mr. Lipsett's appreciative little book on Lord Curzon for this quotation, and take this opportunity of expressing the obligation I am under.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

"It is his duty first and foremost to represent the authority of the Queen-Empress, whose name, revered more than the name of any other living Sovereign by all races and classes from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas, is in India both a bond of union and the symbol of power; and to associate with the personal attributes that cling about that name the conviction that the justice of her Government is inflexible, that its honor is stainless, and that its mercy is in proportion to its strength. Secondly, he should try to remember that all those people are not the sons of our own race, or creed or clime, and that it is only by regard to their feeling, by respect for their prejudices—I will even go so far as to say by deference to their scruples—that we can obtain the acquiescence as well as the submission of the governed. Thirdly, his duty is to recognise that, though relatively far advanced in the scale of civilisation compared with the time of Lord Wellesley, or even Lord Canning, India is still but ill-equipped with the national and industrial resources which are so necessary to her career, and so to work that she may by slow but sure degrees expand to the full measure of her growth. And lastly it is to preserve intact and secure either from internal convulsion, or external inroad the bound-

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

aries of that great and Imperial dominion." This therefore was the first outline of Lord Curzon's policy, and I shall show further on how it developed.

Here in Bombay Lord Curzon together with the beautiful and gracious lady, who accompanied him, were received with a universal acclamation of joy and of hope. Here again I will venture to reproduce some of the remarks which the new Viceroy made in reply to the address presented to him by the Corporation. After stating that it would be premature to give a detailed forecast of the policy he intended to follow, he quoted the saying of another great Englishman sent out on a mission of importance "that he went to hold the scales even" and then went on to say such might be no contemptible motto for a Viceroy of India. "For with what a mosaic of nationalities and interests he is confronted, with his own country men, few in number and scattered far and wide under a trying climate in a foreign land and with the manifold races and beliefs, so composite and yet so divergent, of the indigenous population in its swarming and ever multiplying millions. To hold the scales even under such conditions is a

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

task that calls indeed for supple fingers and for nerves of steel."

Further on as regards the future he said :—

"No one could be more conscious than myself that the verdict to be passed upon my administration depends not upon glittering promise or fair prophecy now, but upon actual performance later on. The time for rejoicing is not when a man putteth on his armour, but when he taketh it off. I thank you for your friendly greeting, because no man can be insensible to the encouragement of a generous welcome. But I shall be tenfold better pleased, if when I weigh anchor from these shores and when all eyes are turned towards my successor, any of you who are now present can come forward truthfully to testify that during my time I have done something if it even be but little, for this land, which next to my own country is nearest to my heart."

In a few days' time we shall assemble, after a period not of five years but of seven has elapsed, in order to bid him farewell, and I may therefore be pardoned if I take this opportunity of passing in review the principal subjects which have been

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

dealt with during his time of office. I propose first of all to quote his own words of promise and then to deal with his performance so as to remind my countrymen on the eve of his departure of the words which he addressed to them seven years ago on his arrival.

It took some time before Lord Curzon could personally satisfy himself as to the subjects which required to be taken in hand, and this time was occupied in travelling about the country and in consultation with his different Lieutenants.

Already in his first Budget speech, two years previously, Lord Curzon had said that there were twelve subjects which he intended to take in hand, but had not particularised them. There had been some speculation as to what they were, and in 1901 he enumerated them. They were as follows :—

1. A stable frontier policy.
2. Creation of a new frontier province.
3. A reform of the transfer and leave rules in the Indian Civil Service.
4. A diminution of report writing.
5. A stable rate of exchange in the currency system.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

6. Encouragement of irrigation.
7. Increase of railways.
8. A cure for agricultural indebtedness.
9. Reduction of the telegraph rate between India and Europe.
10. Preservation of archæological remains.
11. Educational reform.
12. Police reform.

I may perhaps be allowed to make a few remarks about this Budget speech which excited a considerable amount of interest at the time. It was the first occasion on which it had been possible to announce a substantial surplus. The almost nominal surplus which had been provided for by Sir Edward Law's predecessor had been turned into the very satisfactory one of nearly $1\frac{3}{4}$ millions sterling. Lord Curzon without venturing to prophecy as regards the future, spoke of the position as hopeful and said that without "dogmatising," "I think that if we examine our main sources of revenue and note their steady increase, we may feel some confidence that barring the recurrence of disasters, which are beyond our foresight or control, India has already begun to tread upon a brighter

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

and happier path way." That he was fully justified in this confidence has been proved by the results of the years that have since passed, each one constituting, in fact, a record that has broken the previous ones.

As regards the several subjects which on this occasion Lord Curzon announced would "be placed on the anvil" and tested, I shall deal with them in detail, but it seems necessary that I should here point out the extreme caution and deliberation with which Lord Curzon has approached each of the problems he has endeavoured to solve. Two years previously he had announced generally that there were twelve subjects he intended to take in hand. He allowed two years to elapse before he actually did so, or nearly half the appointed period of his Viceroyalty, and only then, when he had fully acquainted himself with the necessity of the work, did he set the machinery in motion which was to carry it out. These two years formed the time of preparation, and it cannot therefore be said that any of his great reforms has been introduced hastily. This however was only the first step, there were still others to be taken before a reform could be

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

introduced or even outlined. The two years that had passed since his arrival in India had been occupied in preparing the ground.

The direction which each enquiry should take had thus been settled, and the plan of campaign had been marked out. In order that the investigation might be as complete and exhaustive as possible, the co-operation of skilled officials, and in many cases of unofficials, was obtained, and Commissions were sent to travel throughout India to collect information from every possible source. The widest publicity was given to these investigations and every one pretending to any knowledge regarding the different subjects was invited to give evidence. When this evidence had been collected, the Commission proceeded to draft its report. These reports again were submitted to the various local Governments for their suggestions, and it was only after receipt of these that the final resolution was drawn up. It can scarcely be said that a more exhaustive process of collecting opinion could have been devised in a country where there is no such thing as a Parliamentary Government. Every possible precaution appears to have been taken to arrive at the truth and to consult the interests,

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

and as far as possible the feelings of the country generally ; and the various resolutions have been arrived at after hearing every side of the different questions raised. Where so many drastic reforms were required, and the sequel will show how drastic some of them had to be, it was not to be supposed that every body would be pleased. Such malcontents have not been wanting, and when raising their angry protests have not hesitated to impute unworthy motives and ulterior designs, but we others, who are prepared to give him credit for honesty of purpose and have been witnesses of the thoroughness of his research, are willing to believe that what has been resolved upon in the best interests of the country and of the people, will ultimately conduce to their well-being.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

CHAPTER III.

INDIA'S PLACE IN THE EMPIRE.

In his speach at the Guildhall in July of last year Lord Curzon himself sketched the position which India fills in the British Empire, and the part which she has to play in the relations of the Empire to other countries. I cannot therefore do better than reproduce his own words on that occasion as showing the task that he had set before him to perform before I say a few words regarding the manner in which it has been accomplished.

"If you want to save your Colony of Natal from being overrun by a formidable enemy, you ask India for help, and she gives it; if you want to rescue the white men's legations from massacre at Peking, and the need is urgent, you request the Government of India to despatch an expedition, and they despatch it; if you are fighting the mad Mullah in Somaliland, you soon discover that

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Indian troops and an Indian General are best qualified for the task, and you ask the Government of India to send them ; if you desire to defend any of your extreme outposts or coaling stations of the Empire, Aden, Mauritius, Singapore, Hong-kong, even Tien-tsin or Shan-hai-kwan, it is to the Indian Army that you turn ; if you want to build a railway to Uganda or in the Soudan, you apply for Indian labour. When the late Mr. Rhodes was engaged in developing your recent acquisition of Rhodesia, he came to me for assistance. It is with Indian coolie labour that you exploit the plantations equally of Demerara and Natal ; with Indian trained officers that you irrigate Egypt and dam the Nile ; with Indian Forest Officers that you tap the resources of Central Africa and Siam ; with Indian Surveyors that you explore all the hidden places of the earth."

In addition to the foregoing the Viceroy also alluded to "the perpetual and harrassing anxiety of a land frontier 5,700 miles in length, peopled by hundreds of different tribes, most of them inured to religious fanaticism and hereditary rapine." It is the safe-guarding of this frontier that is one of the Indian Viceroy's chief duties. We, here, in the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

midst of India, living in security under the protection of British rule, have learned during the last hundred years to forget the anarchy and desolation which swept over the country in the tracks of the marauding armies of Indian Princes. Because, here, around us reigns the Pax Britannica there has arisen a party which exclaims: 'Why spend millions upon an army which is not required? Reduce the military expenditure and relieve the overtaxed ryot.' But they forget that beyond that frontier wall, extending over 5,700 miles and vulnerable by land and by sea, there are rival nations, great powers who have long been jealous of England's possession of this great Empire, and who would only too gladly take her place. The great military forces of India are no longer required for internal defence. One State has not to be protected against the other. Where a hundred years ago a regiment was required, all that is now wanted is a small body of policemen. The danger is no longer in the interior but on the frontier, and as each year the prosperity of the country goes on increasing, so does that danger increase, and the bait become more tempting. One of the most important of the Viceroy's duties is, therefore, the regulation of her frontier defence. As

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

regards the frontier by land it is often urged that India possesses a natural and almost impregnable boundary of huge mountains, and that as long as her army remains quietly behind this barrier, it would be impossible for any foreign foe to attack her. On the other hand the advocates of the so-called Forward Policy maintain that we should push our front line beyond these mountains, for fear that the Power whose approach is gradual but ceaseless, should absorb the States which now form a buffer between India and herself, and thus making her frontier conterminous with our own, should be in a position to excite the restless and turbulent hill tribes against us, and, with their aid, should march through the few passes and establish herself on this side, so that with her communications in the rear left open she would be continually receiving reinforcements and be able to establish herself in a position from which it would be difficult, if not impossible, to expel her. For the last fifty years our relations with these hill tribes had been a constant source of trouble. Scarcely a year passed without a punitive expedition being sent against one or the other of them, and it was in following out a too aggressive forward policy that on more than one occasion India

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

has become involved in war with Afghanistan, the State of all others which, if friendly to us, would form a most effectual buffer to any Russian advance. The policy adopted by Lord Curzon has none of the defects of either system. Refraining from any meddlesome interference with the Ruler of Afghanistan, he formed with the late Amir, and has since renewed with his son and successor, a friendly alliance; and, so as to conciliate the border tribes, he has detached all that portion which they inhabit, and has formed it into a separate province, the head of which is in direct communication with the Viceroy himself, and whose subordinates are men especially selected for their knowledge of the languages and customs of the tribes. Instead of overawing them by detached outposts and threatening garrisons, they have been induced to form themselves into a militia officered and disciplined by Europeans. Thus their fighting instincts have been made use of for the maintenance of peace and security. For more than thirty years the proposal to create a separate frontier province has been under discussion, but has always been shelved. It has remained for Lord Curzon to take the decisive step, and, as far as can be judged after the lapse of four years, with the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

happiest results. The period since the introduction of this change has been one of peace and quiet, and these restless tribes are gradually being accustomed to the habits of civilization and are being trained to become a line of defence instead of, as heretofore, an element of danger and aggression.

In the meantime, under the military organiser, Lord Kitchener, the whole of the interior defence arrangements are being revolutionized. Instead of a number of comparatively small and scattered garrisons, they are being concentrated and moved up towards the frontier, with every point of which they will be placed in touch by means of the strategical railways, so that long before a hostile army could reach one of the vulnerable portions of the frontier barrier there will be an overwhelming force at hand to meet it. For many hundreds of years India has been the goal which other nations have sought to reach. It was in the search of the easiest way to reach India that almost all of the hitherto unknown parts of the world have been discovered, and it is not to be expected that with the increase of prosperity she should become less

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

desirable. Now that Russia has been cut off from the outlet in the Far East, it is more than probable that she will cast her eyes towards some port from which India would be accessible, and the natural object of her striving will be the Persian Gulf. But in this direction the result of Lord Curzon's policy has been to show her, and other European nations, that India is determined that British influence in the Persian Gulf shall be predominant. So much for the North and North-Western Frontier. Towards the North-East it became necessary to teach Monk-ridden Thibet a lesson. It was Thibet, that nineteen years ago took the offensive, and made a raid into British territory, and since then it has been Thibet, that has neglected to observe her treaty engagements, and whilst refusing to hold any communication with India, or even to receive letters from the representative of the Emperor of India, entered into relations with another Great Power, situated at a great distance, and whose steady advance towards our frontier has been a constant source of alarm. Lord Curzon said at the Guildhall last year, in reference to this subject,—"I was sent to India, amongst other objects, to guard the frontier of India and I have done it. I was not sent there to

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

let a hostile danger and menace grow up just beyond our gates, and I have done my best to prevent it. There are people at home so full of knowledge that they assure us that all these fears were illusory, and that we could with dignity and prudence have gone on turning our other cheek to the Thibetan Smiter. These fears were not illusory. The danger was imminent and real. Perhaps the Frontier States may be taken to know something about it, and if we have, as we have never had before, the Frontier States of Nepal and Sikkim and Bhutan, the majority of them, allied by religious and racial affinities to Thibet, all supporting our action and deploring the folly and obstinacy of the Thibetan Government, there must be strong *prima facie* ground that we were not mistaken in our views." There are unfortunately people in India who also denounce the Tibetan expedition as one of needless aggression, but I do not think that this is a feeling shared by Mahomedans at all events. It has never been one of the traditions of our race that the ruler of a great country should tamely suffer an indignity or an affront, and although it may suit the more effeminate inhabitants of Bengal to clamour for a 'peace at any price' policy, our sympathies will always

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

be with the Viceroy who was ready to uphold the dignity of the Empire that was entrusted to his charge. So much for Lord Curzon's frontier policy, and I think there can be few right-minded men who will not admit that in this respect at all events he is leaving India safer from attack than he found her seven years ago. And now a few words regarding India's position towards the outer world. It was the great Lord Beaconsfield who first conceived the idea of utilizing Indian troops as an important factor in European politics by despatching a force of native regiments to garrison Cyprus. Since then Indian troops have served with distinction on many a battlefield. More especially has this been the case during the time of Lord Curzon's reign. It was the prompt despatch, at a few days' notice, of 8,000 European troops from India that practically saved the Colony of Natal from being over-run by the enemy when the Boer war first broke out. This could not have been done unless by unceasing care and supervision every regiment had not been kept in a high state of preparedness and efficiency. Altogether, whilst the war lasted no less that 13,000 European soldiers were sent from India to take part in the war, and it says a great deal for the loyalty of India and

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

for the affection of the people towards their ruler that no one ever dreamt of taking advantage of this reduction in her strength. On the contrary, every one was only too eager to be allowed to take a share in the defence of the threatened colony. As a native of India I may perhaps be allowed to express a regret that native troops were not allowed to take a share in this expedition. For various reasons, however, it was decided that this should be a *sahib's* war, and so my compatriots were not allowed an opportunity of showing the stuff that they were made of. That a similar prohibition will be made in the future I can scarcely believe, and should the chance again occur, I feel no doubt that the Indian troops will show themselves to be fully equal to their European comrades not only in valour but also in discipline and self-restraint.

Then, again, there was the expedition to China and that to Somaliland. In neither of these did the same restriction seem necessary, and the result was that in both places the Indian contingent showed itself to be second to no other in all military requirements. And here again the affection of the people towards British rule and the British

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

ruler was shown by the eagerness with which they applied for their services to be made use of. All this enthusiasm would not have been shown for an unsympathetic Viceroy. The fact is that by his untiring energy and ceaseless work, Lord Curzon had brought himself into touch with the people and had aroused their sympathies, and as soon as the occasion came, his devotion to duty met with its reward. It is owing to the labours of our departing Viceroy that the people of Great Britain have at last come to recognize that India and her army are important factors in the Imperial defence, and that she can be relied upon in any emergency that may occur. She is no longer a source of weakness but an element of strength to the Empire.

Whilst speaking of the army it will not be out of place to allude to two other branches of the service, in one of which Lord Curzon has shown the greatest interest and of which, the other owes to him its inception. I allude to the Imperial Service Troops and the new Cadet Corps. It was mainly due to the spontaneous offer of my own gracious Sovereign, the Nizam of Hyderabad, that the idea of forming an Imperial Service Corps was first of all formed, and then became an accomplished fact. Lord Curzon has not been slow to see the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

opportunity this idea gave him of fulfilling the promise he held out of associating the Native Princes with him in the affairs of the Empire. To many of these young princes it has given a new ambition and a new object of life. The same may be said of the Cadet Corps in which the sons of Indian Princes and Noblemen are being trained to take a part in the Imperial Service Troops raised in their respective States. Already in Hyderabad one of these cadets, the son of the late Nawab Sir Vikar-ul-Umra, has been selected for an important military post of responsibility, and they are all of them thus afforded an opportunity of a military career instead of spending their lives in luxury and idleness. All this is a fresh proof, if another were needed, of Lord Curzon's active sympathy for the people under his rule. He has constantly been striving to raise them to a higher platform and to instil into them higher ideals, and instead of remaining a recluse in the Lodge at Simla, or in the Palace at Calcutta, he has set them an example in his own person of devotion to duty and of a constant endeavour after improvement, or, in the words of the poet,

> "To rise on stepping stones
> of their dead selves to higher things."

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

CHAPTER IV.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS—BERAR; BENGAL; PLAGUE AND FAMINE; EARTHQUAKE AND CRIME.

LORD CURZON cannot claim to have extended the outside boundaries of the Empire. His great work has been to consolidate within them. But although he has not added to its extent, he has created three new provinces within its limits. Of the first I have already spoken. The second has been formed by the amalgamation of Nagpur and the Central Provinces with the District known as the Berars. These Districts in former times had belonged to H. H. the Nizam of Hyderabad. They were practically wrested from him by the Mahrathas, but were ceded to him after the close of the Mahratha war in 1804. Subsequently in 1853 they were again ceded to the British Government "in trust" for the payment of the Hyderabad Contingent Force, and have remained in their possession ever since. In the course of time these districts

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

recovered, and added to, their former prosperity, and when, under the able rule of Sir Salar Jung, the Hyderabad Kingdom reached a state of prosperity it had not known before, it was the ardent wish of the great Minister to redeem the districts which had been pledged away. This he was never able to do, and the whole question became a subject of discussion which lasted for many years, and formed in fact the only point of dissension between the greatest of the independent States of India and the Supreme Government. At last during the Regency, which preceded the accession of the present Nizam, it was finally decided that nothing should be done in the matter until after the present Nizam should have succeeded, when, if he should wish to re-open the question, he might do so. The whole question involved a considerable amount of acrimonious controversy, into which I need not enter here. The British Government, on the one hand, were unwilling to give up a country which had for so many years been in their possession, whilst, on the other hand, the Nizam's authorities and his Regent were anxious to give back to him his kingdom intact. For a considerable time after his accession the present Nizam took no steps whatsoever. The surplus revenues of the Berar

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Provinces were regularly paid over to HisHighness' Government and amounted on an average to about 20 lakhs of rupees. But then about the beginning of the nineties this surplus gradually decreased in amount. From year to year it became "smaller by degrees and beautifully less," whilst at the same time the actual revenue increased in a similar proportion. The reason of this was the increased expenditure in the Province itself. The Public Press at length began to take notice of this state of things, and for several years after 1896 the subject formed one of considerable controversy both in India and in England. At last there occurred the great famine of 1899-1900. Not only was the Hyderabad State affected—she had to borrow two crores of rupees in order to meet her extra expenditure,—but the Berar Province also suffered. The surplus had for some time ceased to exist, and in fact had been changed into a deficit, which in the famine year amounted to a crore and a quarter. It was then that Lord Curzon resolved to take the matter in hand and, if possible, devise some remedy which could bring about a settlement satisfactory to both parties. A Commission was first of all sent to make a searching enquiry into the civil and military expenditure,

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

and after its report had been submitted, an arrangement was at last arrived at. Throughout the negotiations the Resident, Sir David Barr, treated with H. H. the Nizam only, and not, as had been the custom hitherto, through the medium of the Minister. It is thus certain that nothing could have been done which did not have His Highness' full concurrence. The result was published just before the Delhi Durbar. His Highness the Nizam continued to retain his sovereign rights over the Province, but gave over the administration in perpetuity to the British Government in return for a fixed rent of 25 lakhs annually. Of this a certain proportion was to be at once paid and the remainder to go towards paying off the liabilities incurred to the British Government, so that after a series of years the Hyderabad Government would receive the full amount of the rental. On their part the British Government relieved H. H. the Nizam of all responsibility as regards the Hyderabad Contingent, which thereafter became part of the British force. In this simple manner was a question set at rest which for many years had formed, as it were, an open sore and had been the cause of friction and ill-feeling. It is true that there are still some who maintain that H. H. the Nizam came off

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

second best in the bargain, but that is a matter with which, as it seems to me, neither they nor any one else has anything to do. The question was settled by His Highness himself and had therefore his full approval and concurrence. His Highness himself, as is well known, is one of the shrewdest and most able Rulers in India, and he was the person best calculated to know what best suited his interests. As far as Lord Curzon is concerned, it can only redound to his credit that he resolved to set at rest for ever a question that, if left alone, might again crop up and lead to unpleasant consequences. He did so by causing his Resident to confer with His Highness direct, and this having been done he at once accepted the arrangement they had mutually arrived at. This was a course least calculated to offend His Highness' susceptibilities, and the manner in which His Highness' action was appreciated is best shown by the hitherto unprecedented honour which was awarded to him at the Delhi Durbar by creating him a G.C.B.

The new Province formed by the partition of Bengal has given rise to much heated controversy, but it is a step that has been taken after full and ample consideration and in the interests of the people themselves. The Bengalis seem to think

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

that by separating a portion of the Province and joining it on to Assam, their nationality will be diminished, but we in the rest of India cannot sympathise with them in this respect. In no other Province of India do the inhabitants belong to one race only, and I fail to see why what applies elsewhere should not apply to Bengal. Besides, it is only the portion separated that will be brought together with another race, and there is a probability of the Bengali element eventually predominating. It has been urged that if the work of the Province, as it existed, was too heavy for a Lieutenant-Governor, it would have been better to have formed it into a Governorship with a Regular Council, but to this there are many objections, one of them being that of expense. Moreover, the desirability of the change has long been discussed. The idea is not a new one. It was left for Lord Curzon to carry through a project which had been resolved upon, deferred, and at last had become inevitable. The Bengalis seem to wish to have their own way in everything, and directly a measure is passed which is not to their liking, even though it is intended to promote the interests of the country, they at once raise an outcry as if they were the only persons in the world who deserve

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

consideration. Mahomedans are not likely to estimate a loyalty of this kind very highly, and the movement set on foot in Bengal has called forth very little sympathy in the rest of India.

It is curious to note that in the *Swadeshi* movement, which has been started in Bengal, by which the people are endeavouring to signify their disapproval of the partition of that Province by boycotting European goods, they are adopting a course which is in fact a carrying out of the policy which Lord Curzon has not only impressed upon them, but has himself endeavoured to inaugurate, *viz.*, the encouragement of native manufactures. There is nothing to be gained by boy-cotting European goods if there is not a sufficiency of native manufactures to meet the demand. In order to do this effectually they must increase the number of manufactories, otherwise the only result will be so great a rise in the price of the native manufactured article as to defeat the object they have in view; already we hear that in some parts native-made goods have risen 10 per cent. in value. It will require a very much larger amount of patriotism than I can give the people credit for if they stand an increase like this for any length of time.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Should, however, the movement have the effect of inducing the capitalists to invest their hoarded wealth in the construction of new native enterprises, there is probably no one who will be more gratified at the result than Lord Curzon himself.

If there is one thing that should endear Lord Curzon to the people of India it is the sympathy that he has shown for them in the great calamities of plague and famine with which the country has been visited during his term of office. Every human effort possible has been made to alleviate suffering and distress, and over all operations the Viceroy has himself exercised the most careful personal supervision. As regards plague, every endeavour has been made to discover the cause and origin of this mysterious disease, and to adapt the measures necessary for the protection of the people as much as possible to their habits and customs. When plague made its appearance before Lord Curzon's arrival, the measures adopted were at first harsh and uncongenial. This has been remedied, and the people no longer regard the plague authorities with hatred or meet them with opposition. Every resource of science has been availed of, and there seems now to be a fair hope that the disease will be successfully grappled with.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

As regards another of God's visitations, it was during Lord Curzon's period of office that the severest and most widespread famine in the memory of man has occurred, and never has a famine campaign been more efficiently or more successfully grappled with. Of late years famines unfortunately have been of frequent occurrence, but previously they had been more or less circumscribed in area. That of 1876-77 extended over a large portion of Bombay and Madras, and every one will admit that it found the authorities far less prepared to grapple with it than they were in 1899-1900. Again, after the last famine had passed away a Commission travelled over the whole of the affected area, held a minute enquiry, and submitted an exhaustive report. The experience thus gained has been embodied in Famine Codes, and the method of meeting and treating a famine has now been reduced to a science. Never again can a famine find the country or the authorities unprepared. The arrangements for observing and reporting the conditions of every portion of the country are now such that long before a famine actually makes its appearance, it announces its own approach. At each stage it is clearly laid down what steps should be taken, and when at last there can no longer be any doubt all

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

the preparations will have been made. The works on which the labourers are to be employed, Imperial and local, have been marked out and planned ; the tools are at hand and the staff of officials ready at their respective posts. The scale of wages has been fixed so as to accommodate itself to the price of grain, and everything that human foresight can devise has been thought of and prepared for. Lord Curzon's promise to place every department on the anvil and then to test its efficiency has been fully kept in regard to famine. The experience gained from the failures and the breakdowns of the past, have been made use of to render such mishaps humanly impossible in the future. Each link in the chain has been tested and every point of importance has been "twice done and then done double." For this the country is indebted to Lord Curzon's thoroughness, and, as has been already said, the sympathy which he has shown for the people in this respect alone should make his memory live for ever in their hearts.

In so large an Empire as India scarcely a year passes without some calamity occurring in one portion or the other. Last year the North of India and one Himalayan Valley was visited with a terrible earthquake. Here again the sympathy of the rulers for the ruled was shown in the prompt

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

measures which were taken for the relief of those who had suffered. These calamities must occur, but if there is one thing that distinguishes British rule from that of former dynasties and governments, it is the prompt and far-reaching nature of the succour it affords. In former days relief was given spasmodically and locally; now it is given imperially. Formerly in remote parts men and women died in thousands, unheeded and uncared for; now-a-days the long arm of the Government reaches into the most inaccessible corners of the most outlying districts. In the place of chaos and incompetence there is now order and efficiency.

In connection with Lord Curzon's sympathy for the people I may here point to the several occasions on which he has interfered to give protection to the native when oppressed by Europeans. He has not hesitated to call Courts of law to account, when it appeared that evenhanded justice had not been done, and when, as in two flagrant cases, the offenders were members of a regiment and were being screened by their comrades, he has not hesitated, at the risk of his own popularity, to administer a wholesome punishment. Fortunately, such incidents are now of rare occurrence, and when they do happen there is often a desire to hush up a

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

scandal. Lord Curzon, however, has insisted that strict justice should be dealt out to white and black alike. In the words of his promise at Bombay, he has "held the scales." In Bengal, where men's feelings have become excited over other matters, these points would seem to have been lost sight of, but we in the rest of India, who are not so prejudiced, cannot forget them, and feel grateful to the Viceroy who interferes at the risk to his own popularity in order to support the weak against the strong.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

CHAPTER V.

TRADE—REVENUE RAILWAY EXTENSION AND TAXATION.

In spite of plague and famine the years of Lord Curzon's viceroyalty have each been marked with increasing prosperity. The record of each succeeding year has been broken by that of the next. In nothing has this been so marked as in the trade returns. The returns of imports and exports (omitting those on account of the Government) for the last five years are shown on p. 47.

When the different items are gone into, it is found that the increase extends to almost every branch of trade. Under exports the most remarkable is the expansion of the grain trade. During the last ten years the exports of wheat have more than quadrupled, having risen from 10,000 cwts. to 43,000, and the value from nearly 4 crores to nearly 18. It is the same with rice and with cotton, and every year fresh tracts of country are being brought under cultivation. This has been rendered possible by the enormous extension of

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

	1900-01.	1901-02.	1902-03.	1903-04.	1904-05.
IMPORTS—					
Merchandise ...	76,27,78,853	81,51,89,794	78,78,79,084	84,82,32,930	96,67,80,884
Gold	11,87,13,827	8,29,76,205	13,14,66,553	20,13,11,752	21,81,19,745
Silver	4,59,22,253	11,35,07,591	12,10,90,721	11,81,20,869	11,21,55,553
Total Imports ...	92,74,14,933	1,01,16,73,590	1,04,04,36,358	1,16,76,65,551	1,29,70,56,182
EXPORTS—					
Foreign merchandise re-exported ...	3,20,85,314	3,25,98,163	2,93,56,132	3,32,55,087	3,37,25,945
Indian merchandise ...	1,04,16,04,984	1,21,20,50,631	1,25,87,97,516	1,49,63,40,735	1,54,12,74,199
Gold	4,30,58,851	3,36,64,788	3,67,73,923	3,80,26,776	3,69,85,896
Silver	3,16,85,700	5,09,60,877	5,13,26,185	4,34,66,954	4,27,79,760
Total Exports ...	1,14,84,34,849	1,32,92,74,459	1,37,62,53,756	1,61,10,89,552	1,65,47,65,800

railways, communications, and irrigation canals. "Since the long cycle of lean years, which marked the close of the last century, unbroken agricultural prosperity, which is essential to the well-being of the exported trade, has been generally experienced. The most notable feature of the year is the extraordinary development of the grain trade which

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

has increased in volume by 32 per cent. and in value by 851 lakhs. The total value of grain and pulse reached the unprecedented value of 4,111 lakhs, this being 26·7 per cent. of the total value of the export trade."—(Review of the Trade of India for 1904-05). If this increase continues, before long, India will form one of the chief food-suppliers of the United Kingdom. There are, however, not wanting those who find in this development of trade a cause for complaint. "The country," they say, "is being drained of its wealth." They point to the difference between the value of the exports and that of the imports, and say that this represents the wealth that has gone out of the country never to return. But they forget that all these exports are paid for. They are not extorted by task masters from unwilling ryots and sold for the benefit of the Government, but for every ton of goods sent away from India by sea there comes back the cash price. An increase of exports means, therefore, an increase of money coming back to be spent in the country. The ryot sells his grain to the village merchant, and if this year he can sell two hundred weight where last year he only produced one, he is by so much the gainer. The village merchant

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

sells to big brokers and merchants at the ports, and they send the grain home to be sold in the market, but always for cash, which is sent back to India in the shape of goods, bullion, or bills which are convertible into money at will. "But," say the objectors, "the balance of trade is against India; she sends away more than she gets back, and therefore she is being gradually deprived of her life's blood." But they forget that exports are what we sell, and imports are what we buy. Now if a man sells more than he buys, it means in ordinary life that he is gradually heaping up riches. Here in India it is true that we sell more than we buy, but the reason of that is that the people who receive the money for the goods they sell do not invest the whole in the purchase of other goods. They keep a considerable balance. But it remains in the country, and the country is so much the richer for it. In a country where the trade is what is called healthy, the exports should be equal to the imports, which means that the sellers do not let any of their purchase money be idle, but turn it over again and make profit on the whole of it. Here in India a large portion is allowed to remain idle. But it is here, and is annually increasing in amount. The figures which I have quoted

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

above show that the trade is annually becoming more active, and each year the sellers purchase more goods than they did the year before. Thus in the matter of "merchandize," whereas five years ago they only purchased for 76·27 crores, last year they purchased for 96·67 crores. This increase goes on annually, and is more marked with each successive year. The figures also afford another proof of the fact that more money comes into India than goes out of it. Take for instance last year's figures. Whereas gold and silver to the value of 33·00 crores were imported, less than 8·00 crores were exported. Now, this goes on from year to year, and the result is that the balance of gold and silver retained in India is annually increasing. I will quote one more sentence from the Report on Trade for last year. "An estimate was made in the Review of the Trade of 1903-04 of the net imports of gold and silver since 1835-36, adding the figures for 1904-05 the totals are gold net imports £167,757,439 and gold production £21,208,210 which together give £189,167,649 as the absorption of gold during the last 70 years. The value of the net imports of silver during the same period is Rs. 4,479,091,615, of which the estimated equivalent is 1,729,621,823 ounces."

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

I have gone at some length into these figures as an answer to those who say that the alleged increase in the prosperity of the country is all a sham, and that she is being gradually drained of her wealth for the benefit of England. The contrary is the case, and for the last seventy years the wealth of the country has been rapidly increasing. If only more of it were employed in trade and not left to be idle, the country would be more prosperous still. Now it is only fair that the Ruler under whose auspices the prosperity of the country increases should get, at all events a certain amount of the credit for such increase; for increase of trade is due in a great measure to good government, and there can be no doubt that the currency regulations introduced by Lord Curzon to which I shall allude later on, have in a great measure contributed to the increase of trade. The great increase of trade has also been rendered possible by the existing railways. During the last seven years nearly five thousand miles of rail have been laid down at a cost bordering on eleven crores of rupees. These lines have now almost entirely been acquired by the State, and the percentage of earnings has risen all round by about one per cent., until last year it represented 5·91 on the capital

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

outlay. The total extent of railways in India is 27,563 miles, and represents a capital outlay of 356·35 crores of rupees. So that during Lord Curzon's period of office the average mileage laid down has increased from about 400 miles in the year to something over 700. Now this is a considerable achievement, and only those who lived through times of famine 30 years ago know how much it means towards the saving of life. Railways make it possible for the agriculturists to send their crops to distant markets and sell them there at a profit. Without them they would rot in the fields or the villages. Without communications, or with only roads as means of communications, there was no object to be gained in bringing fresh land under cultivation for food stuffs, since the cost of distant transport would have made the price prohibitive. Each district therefore only raised food grain sufficient for its wants, and when the rains failed and the stocks were exhausted, there was absolutely no food to be got. In ordinary years there would be more than plenty; in bad years, starvation. In the great famine of the year 1876-77 there were only 7,000 miles of railway throughout the whole of India. In almost every district in the Madras and Bombay Presidencies there were por-

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

tions situated a hundred or even a hundred fifty miles away from a line of railway, and in the North many thousands of square miles were left waste, because the cost of conveying the crops to the nearest railway would have been too heavy to enable them to be sold at a profit. These are now tapped by railways, and instead of being waste are converted into corn fields. It is said that an actual food famine is no longer possible in India; the only trouble is the price at which the food can be sold and the money with which to buy it. When there is famine in one portion of this great Empire there are sure to be other portions where there is Plenty, and the task is to bring the food from one portion to another at the lowest possible cost. This can only be done by railways, and Lord Curzon's solicitude for the good of the country has been shown by the energy with which he has pushed on their construction. And financially they are a success. An average dividend of nearly 6 per cent. is a feat which few other countries have been able to achieve. In Russia the railways actually entail a loss. But strange to say even this active railway policy has by some been made a cause of reproach against Lord Curzon's government. It seems to be impossible to satisfy some people, and there is there-

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

fore no use in trying. Lord Curzon laid down for himself the lines of the policy which he considered best suited to the interests of the country, and this policy he has steadily pursued in spite of calumny and abuse. From time to time he has condescended to meet the arguments of his opponents and to show them where they are wrong, but he has not for a moment swerved from the path before him. And be it remembered this policy has not been hastily formed. For nearly two years the time was taken up in learning what it was the country required. No reform has been commenced without a full and exhaustive enquiry, and the public have been taken into the confidence of the Government more fully than has been the case under any other Viceroy.

Another proof of the increase of prosperity during the last seven years is to be found in the enormous increase in the revenue. There was a time when deficits were of common occurrence, but of late years, and more especially during the last five, each successive year has shown a new record surplus. Here again his opponents say that this is not due so much to increased prosperity as it is to the fictitious value of the rupee. But, whatever it may be due to, it is a surplus, and means that the expenditure has been greatly below the revenue.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

A portion of that surplus has each time been utilized in alleviating the condition of the people, sometimes by the remission of land taxation, by the reduction in the salt tax, and by raising the standard of those liable to pay income-tax. Whilst on the subject of taxation I wish to say something regarding the great controversy regarding the incidence of the land tax upon the agriculturist. This was a matter which was dealt with at great length and with considerable exaggeration by the late Mr. Digby in his book sarcastically called "Prosperous British India." Mr. Digby in his book attempted to, and did actually prove—to his own satisfaction—that in 1850 the average income of a native of India was 2*d.* (or say 2 annas), in 1880 1½*d.*, and in 1900 ¾*d.* Now this was proving a great deal too much, for it is manifest with an average income of this amount the whole population must have died of starvation. But there can be no doubt that the actual condition of the Indian agriculturist is a very poor one indeed. The great difference between Lord Curzon and his critics is that whereas they say that it is getting worse from year to year, Lord Curzon says that it is improving. It is probably true that the average income of the native of India is not more than Rs. 30 per annum,

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

and that the incidence of taxation is as high as 3*s.* 3¼*d.* or about Rs. 2½, but on official figures, which at least are as reliable as Mr. Digby's unofficial ones, Lord Curzon shows that the average income of the native has increased from Rs. 27 in 1880 to Rs. 30 three years ago. As regards the incidence of the land revenue being the cause of famines, Lord Curzon has proved that the argument is an entirely fallacious one. When a famine happens everything is swept away, and for at least six months there is nothing. Mr. Digby, Mr. Dutt, and the Congress maintain that if he had not to pay so high a tax, the ryot would have a greater reserve with which to maintain himself. Granted that the average taxation of the ryot is 3*s.* 3¼*d.* Suppose that to be reduced by 2*s.* It will be admitted that he must pay something. If it were reduced to 1*s.* 3¼*d.*, he would have 2*s.* or, say, Rs. 1·12 per annum from which to form a reserve (supposing that in the interval he has not lavishly squandered this amount) with which to meet a famine. How long would such a reserve, if it ever existed, last in a time of famine? It would not last a month, and the ryot would then be in the same miserable state as he is now when such a calamity occurs. As Lord Curzon justly pointed out in his memorandum

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

of 1902, when a famine does occur it is so overwhelming that a rupee more or less of taxation has absolutely no effect one way or the other. But a reduction of the rate in ordinary years would decrease the possibility of the Government being able to give a sufficient amount during a time of distress. Still it is no doubt true that at the present day there is a much larger proportion of poverty than there was forty or fifty years ago. This, however, is the inevitable result of civilisation. In a more primitive or Arcadian state of society, there is scarcely any poverty in ordinary years; but at the same time there is very little wealth. There is, ordinarily speaking, a sufficiency. Such a condition of things existed in the time of the Patriarch Jacob. But even then when a famine occurred there was not a reserve in the country with which to meet it, and the Patriarch had to send to Egypt for corn with which to feed his people. But as civilization advances and the population increases, the conditions of society must inevitably change. The same factors that bring about the accumulation of wealth lead also to the increase of poverty. The more thrifty and those of greater strength of character will gradually get into their possession the larger portion of the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

country's wealth. This has been the result of the increase of communications and of irrigation works in India; and it is the result of a natural law, that, as individuals increase in wealth, so will there be an even larger individual proportion of paupers, of labourers, fairly well off in ordinary years, but who, when a famine occurs, at once collapse. Forty or fifty years ago it took at least two bad seasons to bring about a famine. At the present time if one monsoon fails there will be thousands who are in need of relief or employment. The majority of the peasant proprietors, who in patriarchal times were able to support themselves and their families in ordinary years have, with the increase of civilization, become labourers. A number have emerged from this condition, and have become proprietors and capitalists, and give to the others employment which in a usual season is sufficient to provide a sufficiency of food and comfort. The old saying that money attracts money, holds good, and, as years go on, the capitalists and proprietors increase, but not in the same proportion as the population increases. The actual wealth of the country increases in the same ratio. But when a failure of rain occurs in an agricultural country like India, there is no cultiva-

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

tion, consequently there is no demand for labour, and a large proportion of the populace has to look to the Government for relief. In the meantime the collections of revenue are suspended, and the proprietors, employing no labour, are able to sit quietly until the rains come in due season. The burden of a famine does not fall so much upon the agricultural proprietors as upon the Government, which has to give the labourers employment on the relief works. If a proof of this is required it will be found in the extraordinary vitality which enables a tract of country which for twelve months has been the scene of famine horrors, to recover as soon as the rains fall. If the actual proprietors and agriculturists had been ruined, this would not be possible, but past history teaches us that the year succeeding a famine is generally one of extraordinary prosperity. A hundred years ago this was not the case, because the three-acre-and-solitary-cow proprietors took longer to recover than do the larger proprietors in the present time, and the labourers are maintained by Government until the rains fall and there is plenty of employment to be had.

One attack that has been made against the Government of India is the introduction of periodi-

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

cal settlements, and, judging from the results of the permanent settlement in Bengal, it is argued that a permanent settlement in other provinces would bring about a larger amount of prosperity. The argument is a plausible one, and under the native Government of former times would be almost unanswerable. But under the modern system, in which the Government spends annually enormous sums in the development of the country's resources, by railways, canals, communication and general improvements, a permanent settlement would mean that the Government could take no profit from the increased prosperity. This would manifestly be unfair. As prices rise and the general condition of the people improves, the Government has a right to expect a return for the money that it has expended. Personally I should wish to see the time when the settlement throughout the Empire is permanently fixed. I believe that that time is approaching and that the enormous stock of information that has been collected by the various commissions of enquiry that Lord Curzon has instituted, will enable some future Viceroy to announce that as far as the greater part of India is concerned, the limit of settlement has been reached and will not in future be exceeded.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

CHAPTER VI.

POLICE REFORM AND EDUCATION.

If Lord Curzon had done nothing else he would have earned the gratitude of India for his courage in taking up and grappling the question of Police reform. It is only the lower classes that know how heavily the hand of the law can oppress them and how those whose ostensible duty is to protect, can become their oppressors at almost every stage of their lives. For years it has been known that almost all the subordinate ranks of the Police were corrupt to the very core, and that no one could be safe from their depredations and extortions. It was not long before that Lord Curzon became convinced that it was not even necessary to place this department on the anvil in order to find out whether there was a flaw, and, if so, where. But in order to be sure of the extent of the evil, a most searching enquiry was made by a Commission which visited every part of India. Previous to the visit of the Commission local enquiries and reports had been made by District Committees

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

especially appointed, so that in a way the ground had been prepared in each district. The unanimous report of this Commission revealed a state of things which took very few persons by surprise, and it speaks well for the moral courage of the members, most of whom were high officials, that they did not hesitate to speak out boldly, and for that of the Government that it was not deterred from publishing their report, but accepted their recommendations almost in their entirety. I will venture to make a few quotations from this lengthy report. After giving a short sketch of the history of Police organizations in India from the time of Akbar, it quotes from a letter written by the late Sir John Woodburn, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, that "in no branch of the Administration in Bengal is improvement so imperatively demanded as in the Police. There is no part of our system of Government, of which such universal and bitter complaint is made, and none in which for the relief of the people, and the reputation of the Government is reform in anything like the same degree called for. The evil is essentially in the investigating staff. It is dishonest and it is tyrannical." The Commission at once proceeds "as the result of their enquiries, emphatically to record their

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

full concurrence in the views of the late Sir John Woodburn. There is no province in India to which these remarks may not be applied." And again "Everywhere they went, the Commission heard the most bitter complaints of the corruption of the Police. These complaints were made not by non-officials only, but also by officials of all classes, including Magistrates and Police Officers, both European and Native * * * the corruption of the constable is more intolerable because of the greater opportunities of oppression and extortion which his police powers afford, because of the intimate connection he has with the general life of the town and country, and because of the possibility of his being brought at any time into special relations with the individual * * * To pay a constable Rs. 6 or even Rs. 7 per mensem, especially when certain deductions are made for uniform, etc., is to offer strong inducement to dishonesty. It is urgently necessary to remove any excuse for dishonesty which Government should never allow to exist by giving to the constable a living wage and reasonable means of supporting himself and family without resort to dishonest practices. To this underpaid official duties are often assigned for which he is not

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

qualified. The strongest complaints are made in the country regarding the beat system and regarding the permission too frequently given to constables to investigate cases, and in the towns regarding the powers of constables in reference to nuisance cases. It is not difficult to see how the performance of duties such as these by an inadequately paid agency must lead to corruption and extortion. The evil is still further intensified by the utterly inadequate training given to constables and by the general absence of any attention to the necessity for keeping the temper, being civil and respectful to the public, avoiding brutality or unnecessary harshness, and seeking by all legitimate means to make their performance of duty as little distasteful to the people as possible. When it is considered how much all this is insisted on in England, it is not difficult to understand how frequent are the complaints of the high-handed indifference of Police here to the feelings of the people, nor does one wonder at the coarse and brutal way in which the Police often treat crowds or individuals with whom they have to deal. This is alleged everywhere as a cause of Police unpopularity, as a reason for the people dreading the Police and making every effort to avoid having

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

anything to do with them. These men, too often rough, ill-trained, and underpaid, are clothed with authority to report on the work of village headmen, to investigate cases in remote villages, or to arrest respectable citizens for alleged nuisances in towns. The annoyance and vexation which their practices of extortion and oppression often inflict on the people have been strongly urged before the Commission."

Again: "The forms of corruption are very numerous. It manifests itself in every stage of the work of the Police station. The Police officer may levy a fee or receive a present for every duty he performs. The complainant has often to pay a fee for having his complaint recorded. He has to give the investigating officer a present to secure his prompt and earnest attention to the case. More money is extorted as the case proceeds. When the officer goes down to the spot to make his investigation, he is a burden not only to the complainant but to his witnesses, and often to the whole village; people are harrassed sometimes by being compelled to hang about the Police officer for days, sometimes by having to accompany him from place to place, sometimes by attendance at the Police station, sometimes by having him and

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

his satellites quartered on them for days, sometimes by threats of evil consequences to themselves or their friends (especially to the women of the family) if they do not fall in with the view of the case; sometimes by invasion of their houses by low-caste people on the plea of searching for property, sometimes by unnecessarily severe and degrading measures of restraint. From all this deliverance is often to be bought only by payment of fees or presents in cash. The station-house officer will sometimes hush up a case on payment of his terms; he will receive presents from parties and their witnesses; he will levy illicit fees from shopkeepers and others for services rendered, or to obviate vexatious espionage. He has a specially rich vein in cases concerning disputes about land, water or crops, and sometimes in the management of cattle-pounds. Both parties are often willing to pay him well for maintaining neutrality; or one party will pay well for intervention on his behalf. The illicit gains in some Police stations in Bengal in connection with *chur* (or alluvial) lands are almost incredible. It may be incidentally remarked that the Government of Bengal should endeavour to devise some means for the summary and prompt settlement of such cases by

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Revenue officers, subject (if necessary) to revision by the Civil Courts, so as to prevent the Police from having anything to do with them."

I have considered it necessary to give the quotations at such length, in order that the picture officially drawn may be clearly put before my readers, so that they may understand the gigantic nature of the task which Lord Curzon undertook when he resolved to reform the Police. The only thing that can be compared to it was the task allotted to Hercules of cleansing the Augean stables. In Lord Curzon's case, however, it was a whole Empire that had to be cleansed from this corruption and not a mere stable. This of course is not a task that can be completed in a year, but the result of the Commission's labours has been to propose a scheme which has been frankly accepted by the Government even although it involves an enormous additional cost, and will, it is hoped, gradually bring about an improvement. It is of course out of the question that I should discuss the whole of these proposals here. They may be briefly summarised by saying that by raising the pay of all the ranks it will be possible to raise the status of the men who will be recruited. Provision is to be made for the efficient training

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

and education of every member of the force, and the various duties of the town and rural Police are laid down. There is to be uniformity over the whole of India, and provision is made for better supervision. The report was submitted in May 1903, but before any orders could be passed upon it, it had to be referred to the various Governments for their opinions. This involved a reference to the district officials, and when they were in possession of all these reports, the Government of India proceeded to pass its orders, which were published a few months ago. The whole scheme will involve an additional cost of about 150 lakhs of rupees, and for the first year a sum of 50 lakhs has been sanctioned. It has been very rightly decided, since only a limited amount of money is available, that the improvement in the pay should commence with the lower grades, since it is they who come chiefly in contact with the people. As money is available from year to year, the remaining ranks will share in the benefits, but the people must be served first. It is of course premature to say how far the reforms suggested will prove efficacious, but the history of this Commission is a fair example of the thoroughness with which Lord Curzon met each of the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

subjects which he promised to investigate. A long time must necessarily elapse before such wholesale traditions of corruption can pass away, but the manner in which it can be done has been demonstrated and the first step has been taken. The question of the incidence of the land tax is a controversial one, but about the necessity of Police reform there is no controversy, but yet such is the ingratitude of some people that, for a hundred voices raised in denunciation of the land-revenue policy of the Government or of the partition of Bengal, not half a dozen are to be found to express an appreciation of this reform so essential to the well-being and contentment of the people generally.

And now I have to approach a subject which has excited the minds of even larger numbers than have interested themselves in any other of the reforms undertaken by Lord Curzon. The question of the land-revenue policy and taxation has been criticized chiefly by a few philanthropists and faddists; the partition of Bengal excites interest in the Province itself, but the question of education comes home to every district and township in the Empire. There are two parties who are chiefly concerned in this controversy. A large majority of the middle classes who have been benefited by the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

system hitherto in force, and a minority of thehigher classes who are able to see that the new education given by the Government at the cost of so much expenditure has conferred benefits upon the classes rather than on the masses. Outside these two parties there is the huge majority of the Indian population which fifty years of a liberal educational policy has left absolutely untouched. It is still steeped in ignorance and superstition and clings to its old traditional habits. The limit of the educational policy hitherto has been to give a higher instruction to those on the few top rungs of the social ladder, and to leave neglected those on the lower ones. The general result of making a higher education cheap has not been to increase good learning, Education having been made the test of qualification for Government appointments, it has been eagerly sought after as a means towards that end. Those who have been successful have attained the object of their ambition, and their official occupation prevents them from following the pursuits of knowledge. But the supply of appointments has not been able to meet the demand of the qualified candidates. These have gained their qualifications mainly by a pernicious system of 'cram' and having failed to obtain the object of their ambition,

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

are converted into a class of discontented, and too often disloyal, citizens. They have learnt enough to give voice to their clamorous disappointment, but not enough to make their knowledge the means of achieving a useful career. They can write and they can talk and the result is that they become, for the most part, vaporous journalists, or half-starved members of the legal professions. To a poverty-stricken huge majority of agriculturists has now been added a considerable minority of poverty-stricken and half-educated journalists and vakils, who can only earn a livelihood by writing and by talking. I have endeavoured to sketch a picture of the evils of the Police system which Lord Curzon found on his arrival, and I believe that I have fairly shown the evils of the educational policy. Too much had been done in the matter of book-learning and too little in the matter of technical knowledge. If India is to take her proper place in the rank of other civilized countries, she must not depend entirely upon agriculturists, writers and talkers. She must have manufactories and industries in which she can invest the millions of money which during the last 70 years have been retained in the country and which remain unutilized. This is, in a few

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

words, the object of Lord Curzon's educational reform. But here again the step has not been taken hastily. Another Commission formed of representative men, pursued an enquiry and submitted a report—it is true that it was not unanimous, and when that had been fully discussed, the new policy was inaugurated. As regards this I cannot do better than quote Lord Curzon's most recent utterance on the 20th September of this year (1905) delivered to the Conference of the Directors of Public Instruction at Simla:

"Gentlemen, when I came to India, educational reform loomed before me as one of those objects which, from such knowledge of India as I possessed, appeared to deserve a prominent place in any programme of administrative reconstruction. I thought so for several reasons. In the first place, vital as is education everywhere as the instrument by which men and nations rise, yet in a country like India in its present state of development it is perhaps the most clamant necessity of all, for here education is required not primarily as the instrument of culture or the source of learning, but as the key to employment, the condition of all national advance and prosperity, and the sole stepping-stone for every class of the community to higher things.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

It is a social and political, even more than an intellectual, demand, and to it alone can we look to provide a livelihood for our citizens, to train up our public servants, to develop the economic and industrial resources of the country, to fit the people for the share in self-government which is given to them, and which will increase with their deserts, and to fashion the national character on sound and healthy lines. The man in India who has grasped the education problem has got nearer to the heart of things than any of his comrades, and he who can offer to us the right educational prescription is the true physician of the State.

"For the first two years we surveyed the ground and reconnoitred the position of the opposing forces, and then all began. I look to the meetings of the Simla Conference in the month of September 1901, just four years ago, as the first act in the real campaign. That Conference has often been denounced by those who knew not the real nature of its labours as a sort of star chamber conclave that was engaged in some dark and sinister conspiracy. Some of you were present at its meetings, and you know how much of truth there was in that particular charge. I do not hesitate to say that a conference more independent in its character

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

more sincere in its aims, or more practical and far-reaching in its results never met at the head-quarters of the Indian Government. The meeting was a body of experts, non-official as well as official, convened in order to save Government from making mistakes and to assure me that we were advancing upon right lines. Our programme was laid down in the published speech with which I opened the proceedings. We covered the whole field of educational activity in our researches, and we laid down the clear and definite principles which, so far from being concealed, were published at full length later on in the Education Resolution, and which for years to come will guide the policy of the State. Then followed the appointment of a Director-General of Education, most fully justified by the devoted labours, the enthusiasm and the unfailing tack of Mr. Orange. Next in crder came the Universities Commission, presided over by a former colleague, Sir Thomas Raleigh, in 1902. Then followed the Universities Legislation of 1903-04, of which, looking back calmly upon it, I say that I do not regret the battle or the storm, since I am firmly convinced that out of them has been born a new life for higher

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

education in India. Finally, came the comprehensive resolution of which I have spoken. Since then the policy of reform laid down by the Simla Conference has been carried into execution in every branch of educational effort until at last the Directors of Public Instruction from every Province have been sitting here for a week in conference to compare notes as to what has already been accomplished and to discuss fresh plans for the future. These are the main landmarks of the great enterprise upon which we have all been employed for so long, and a moment has arrived when it is not impossible to some extent to reckon up the results.

"What was the state of affairs that we had to redress? I will try to summarise it. As regards primary or elementary education of the children of the masses in the vernaculars, the figures which appeared in the Resolution were sufficiently significant. Four out of every five Indian villages were found to be without a school; three out of every four Indian boys grew up without education, only one Indian girl in every forty attended any kind of school. These figures are, of course, less appalling in a continent of the size, the vast population, the national

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

characteristics and the present state of advancement of India than they would be in any western country, but they are important as illustrating if not the inadequacy of past efforts, at any rate, the immensity of the field that remains to be conquered. We found primary education suffering from divergence of views as to its elementary functions and courses, and languishing nearly everywhere for want of funds. In secondary education, we found schools receiving the privilege of recognition upon mostly inadequate and untrained and incompetent teachers, imparting a course of instruction devoid of life to pupils subjected to a pressure of examinations that encroached upon them out of school hours, and was already beginning to sap the brain power as well as the physical strength of the rising generation. Inferior teaching in secondary schools further has this deleterious effect,—that it reacts upon college works and affects the whole course of university instruction, of which it is the basis and starting point. We found these schools in many cases accommodated in wretched buildings and possessing no provision for the boarding of the pupils. As regards the vernaculars, which for long must be the sole instrument for the diffusion of knowledge among all except a small minority

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

of the Indian people, we found them in danger of being neglected and degraded in the pursuit of English—and in many cases very bad English—for the sake of its mercantile value. By all means let English be taught to those who are qualified to learn it; but let it rest upon the solid foundation of the indigenous languages, for no people will ever use another tongue with advantage that cannot first use its own with ease. But in higher education the position was still worse, for here it was not a question so much of a blank sheet in the education of the community as a page scribbled over with all sorts of writing, some of it well formed and good, but much of it distorted and wrong. We found in some of the affiliated colleges a low standard of teaching and a lower of learning, ill-paid and insufficient teachers, pupils crowded together in insanitary buildings, the cutting down of fees in the interests of an evil commercial competition, and management on unsound principles. Finally, coming to the universities, we found courses of study and a system of tests which were lowering the quality while steadily increasing the volume of the human output; students driven like sheep from lecture room to lecture room and examination to examina-

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

tion, text-books badly chosen, degrees pursued for their commercial value, the Senates with over-swollen numbers selected on almost every principle but that of educational fitness, the Syndicates devoid of statutory powers, a huge system of active but often misdirected effort, over which, like some evil phantom, seemed to hover the monstrous and maleficent spirit of 'cram.' Of course, there were better and reassuring features in the picture. But we have to correct the worse even more than to stimulate the best, and, like a doctor, it was our duty to diagnose the unsound parts of the body rather than to busy ourselves with the sound parts. Moreover, there were some faults that were equally patent everywhere."

I feel that I owe an apology for reproducing so much borrowed matter, but my excuse must be that it shows far more clearly and in infinitely better language than I can command, what the objects of Lord Curzon's educational policy are. Nothing could be truer than his picture of the neglect of primary education :—

"What I think we may claim to have effected has been the following. In primary education, we have realised that improvement means money. We have laid down that primary education must

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

be a leading charge on provincial revenues, and in order to supply the requisite impetus we give in our last budget a very large permanent annual grant of 35 lakhs to be devoted to that purpose alone. This will be the real starting point of an advance that ought never to be allowed henceforward to slacken. Most of the money will go in buildings to begin with and a good deal in maintenance afterwards. Thousands of new primary schools are already opening their doors under these auspices, and in a few years time the results should be very noteworthy. In building, we lay stress upon the provision of suitable and airy school houses in place of the dark rooms or squalid sheds in which the children had previously been taught. Training schools for teachers are similarly springing up or being multiplied in every direction. We have defined the nature of the object lessons that ought to be taught to the children in primary schools, and the courses of study and the books that are required for the instruction of the cultivating classes. We have everywhere raised the pay of primary teachers where this was inadequate, and are teaching them that their duty is to train the faculties of their pupils and not to compel them to the listless repetition of phrases in which the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

poor children find no meaning. I look as the result of this policy to see a great development in elementary education in the near future. It is apt to be neglected in India in favour of the louder calls and the more showy results of higher education. Both are equally necessary, but in the structure of Indian society one is the foundation and the other the coping stone; and we who are responsible must be careful not to forget the needs of the voiceless masses while we provide for the interests of the more highly favoured minority who are better able to protect themselves. In secondary education the faults were largely the same, and the remedies must be the same also. More teachers are the first desideratum; more competent teachers the second; more inspectors the third. The increase that we have everywhere effected in the inspecting staff is remarkable. Next comes reform in the courses of study and buildings. All these necessities are summed up in the duty which we have undertaken of laying down sound tests for official recognition."

And now one more extract regarding the necessity of commercial, agricultural and female education :—

"From this we pass on to the development of the commercial and industrial sides of these schools

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

as against the purely literary, since there are thousands of boys in them who must look to their education to provide them with a practical livelihood rather than to lead them to a degree; and above all, to the reduction of examinations. That is the keynote everywhere. Have your tests sifted out, the good from the bad; furnish the incentive of healthy competition, but remember that the Indian boy is a human being with a mind to be nurtured and a soul to be kept alive, and do not treat him as a mechanical drudge or as a performing animal which has to go at stated intervals through the unnatural task to which its trainer has laboriously taught it to conform. I hope that the Government of India will not be indifferent to the claims of secondary education in the future. When the universities and the colleges have been put straight, we must look to the feeders, and these feeders are the high schools. Indeed, we cannot expect to have good colleges without good schools. I am not sure if a vote were taken among the intelligent middle classes of this country that they would not sooner see money devoted to secondary education than to any other educational object. The reason is that it is the basis of all industrial or professional occupation in India. There is just a

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

danger that between the resonant calls of higher education and the pathetic small voice of elementary education the claims of secondary education may be overlooked, and I therefore venture to give this parting testimonial. When we come to higher education, our policy, though based on identical principles, assumes a wider scope, and has, I hope, already effected an even more drastic change."

"There is a class of education which deserves and has attracted our particular attention, namely, that which is intended to qualify its recipients for the professional occupations of Indian life. The Agricultural College at Pusa, which is intended to be the parent of similar institutions in every other province, each equipped with a skilled staff and adequate funds, has been specially devised to provide at the same time a thorough training in all branches of agricultural science and practical instruction in State management and farm work. These institutions will turn out a body of young men who will spread themselves throughout India, carrying into the management of States and estates, into private enterprise and into Government employ, the trained faculties with which the college courses will have supplied them. Agriculture in India is the first and capital interest of this huge

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

continent, and agriculture, like every other money-earning interest, must rest upon education. Neither have we forgotten female education, conscious that man is to a large extent what woman makes him, and that an educated mother means educated children. Since the Simla Conference, Bengal has already doubled the number of girls under instruction. The female inspecting staff has been overhauled in most provinces, and ladies possessing high qualifications have been sent out from England. Good model girls' schools and good training schools for the female teachers are a desideratum everywhere. It will take a long time to make substantial progress, but the forward movement has begun."

And finally as regards technical education :—

"There remains the subject of technical education which has occupied an immense amount of our attention, both at the Simla Conference and ever since we have had Commissions and reports and enquiries. We have addressed Local Governments and studied their replies, but we are only slowly evolving the principles under which technical instruction can be advantageously pursued in a country where the social and industrial conditions are what they are in India. Whether we look at

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

the upper or at the lower end of the scale, this difficulty is equally apparent. People wonder why Mr. Tata's Institute of Science comes so slowly into being; and in a country where it is the custom to attribute anything that goes wrong to the Government, all sorts of charges have been brought against us of apathy or indifference or obstruction. No one would more readily acknowledge than Mr. Tata himself that, so far from discouragement or opposition, he has met with nothing at the hands of Government but sympathy and support. But Mr. Tata wisely wants not merely to start the magnificent conception of his father, but to make it practical and to ensure its success; and I can assure you that the rival views that prevail as to the best methods of accommodating this great idea to the necessities of India are extraordinary. We have experienced similar difficulties in our own smaller undertakings. As is generally known, we have instituted a number of technical scholarships of £150 each for Indian students in Europe and America, but, strange as it may seem, it has not invariably been easy at first to find the candidates qualified to fill them. However, we now have a number of Indian scholars from Bengal who are studying mining at Birmingham, and our

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

latest step was to grant three scholarships for textile industries in Bombay. Other attempts will follow, and in a short time there will, in my view, be no lack either of candidates or subjects.

"Similarly with industrial schools, which we have been anxious to start on a large scale for the practical encouragement of local industries, there is the widest diversity of opinion as to the principles and the type, for it must be remembered that although India is a country with strong traditions of industrial skill and excellence, with clever artisans and with an extant machinery of trade guilds and apprentices, these are constituted upon a caste basis which does not readily admit of expansion, while the industries themselves are as a rule localised and small, rendering co-ordination difficult. We are, however, about to make an experiment on a large scale in Bombay and Bengal, and I have every hope that upon the labours and researches of the past few years posterity will be able to build."

No doubt there are and will be opponents to this drastic reform, but impartial and uninterested persons will probably admit that a reform was urgently needed, and that the one which has been introduced after lengthened enquiry and full deliber-

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

ation is one which is intended to benefit those who need it most. Of course it will be opposed, but no one can deny that the object of Lord Curzon's educational policy has been to benefit the great mass of the people and the country generally. Unfortunately Lord Curzon will not be here to carry it into full effect, and its ultimate success or failure remains therefore in the womb of the future.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

CHAPTER VII.

OTHER REFORMS—IRRIGATION AND AGRICULTURAL PROBLEMS; CURRENCY; ANCIENT BUILDINGS; INDIAN ARTS EXHIBITION AND ARCHÆOLOGY.

One of the most important of the enquiries set on foot by Lord Curzon is unfortunately not yet completed, or at all events the results are not yet published. I allude to the work of the Irrigation Committee. At present scarcely a year passes without some portion of the Empire being endangered by a deficiency in, or a failure of, the monsoon. It is only in the deltas of the great rivers where there has been made a net-work of irrigation canals, fed from dams thrown across the rivers, that the cultivation may be said to be independent of the monsoon. Sir Arthur Cotton was the great advocate of canals, but although much can be done by irrigation canals where there is a constant supply of water in the snow-fed rivers of the North of India, it is manifest that in

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

other parts, where the rivers are dependent upon the rains for their supply, there must be vast tracts of country where, when the rain fails, there will be no water in the rivers with which to supply the canals. The problem is how to supply means of irrigation to those parts of the country where canals cannot be made. This can only be done by large reservoirs where the surplus water of good years can be stored for use in times of drought or by tapping the subterranean streams of water by means of wells. Of late years, especially since the great famine of 1876-77, much attention has been drawn to wells as a means of ensuring irrigation even in time of the severest drought. It has been found that in the upland tracts where there has been a complete failure of the rains, where the rivers are almost empty, and the irrigation tanks are nothing but dry beds of mud, there is always water to be found at a certain distance from the surface; and during the worst famines, when nine-tenths of the country is a desert without a blade to be seen, there is always a small patch of green crops around an irrigation well, if only it has been kept in proper order and is of sufficient depth. Wells therefore form a more reliable source of irrigation than tanks which depend mainly upon the rain

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

and surface drainage for supply. From time immemorial the natives of India have been alive to the necessity of storing the rain in reservoirs, and it is difficult to find a suitable site which has not already been utilised for this purpose. In some parts of the country where there is generally an ample rainfall, such as the Berar Province, where until 1899-1900 the rains had not been known to fail for 100 years, the construction of storage tanks has been more or less neglected. The object of the Irrigation Commission was to find out from local enquiries in all parts of the country what possibilities existed for the development of canals, reservoirs and wells. A mass of information has been collected, and the publication of the report is looked forward to with considerable anxiety. In the meantime, however, Lord Curzon has shown himself to be fully alive to the great importance of the subject. In his Budget speech of 1900 he already gave a forecast of the irrigation policy of his government in the following words :—

"Now I have had a very careful estimate made out for me of the extent of fresh ground in the whole of India which we are likely to be able to bring under cultivation, either by new irrigation projects or by extensions of existing systems.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Under the head of Productive, that is works which may be expected to yield a net revenue that will more than cover the interest on the capital outlay, the estimated increment is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ million acres, and the estimated outlay between £8,000,000 and £9,000,000 sterling. Under the head of Protective works, that is works which will not pay and which, inasmuch as they constitute a permanent financial burden on the State, can only be undertaken in exceptional cases, and then as a rule do very little towards the prevention of famine, we contemplate spending about 10 lakhs a year (£66,000), and shall probably in this way about double the area of 300,000 acres which is covered by that character of work at the present time. It seems, therefore, that the total practicable increase to the irrigation area of India under both heads will not amount to much more than 4,000,000 acres.

"The total area already irrigated is estimated at 19,000,000 acres, so that the anticipated increase is not very large. This estimate does not include irrigation wells, and whether or not a still larger increase can be expected from a systematic construction of these important sources of irrigation remains to be seen."

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

As regards canal irrigation the great field of operations has been in the Punjab, and during Lord Curzon's period of office very considerable activity has been shown. The great schemes are those known as the Chenab, the Jhelum, and the Bari Doab, and another one, the Sind-Sagar, has been or is about to be started at once. The Chenab canal has a total of 2,489 miles of main line, branch canals and distributaries. It can irrigate an area of 2,646,000 acres, of which 1,828,800 acres were actually cultivated in 1900-01. In a few years the value of this land has risen from £3 an acre (Rs. 45) to £7-10-3 (Rs. 112-8). Where was formerly a desert is now a colony of 800,000 souls, and a railway built for the express purpose enables them to send their grain to a profitable market. The Jhelum scheme has been actually started under Lord Curzon's regimé (1901) and already irrigates about 50,000 acres. It is expected to supply water to an area ten times that extent and to maintain a population of 500,000. The lower Bari Doab will, when completed, serve a similar area, and from the Sind-Sagar project it is expected to reclaim 1,750,000 acres. Altogether there are (says Mr. Lipsett) in the Punjab 16,345 miles of main canals, branches and distributaries. The Punjab,

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

with its five great rivers fed from the snows and the glaciers of the Himalayas, offers of course enormous opportunities for irrigation schemes, which are not to be found elsewhere, but wherever a probability exists, the means of developing it are being investigated. When the Irrigation Commission was appointed, Lord Curzon spoke of its objects in the following terms :—

"I want to be quite sure that no sources of water-supply or water-storage are neglected or ignored in this country. They may not always be great rivers flowing down unimpeded to the sea, though people at home seem to think that any river ought to be capable of being tapped in the Himalayas and diffused either into the Central Provinces, or Gujarat, or Berar. Neither do I postulate everywhere profitable or remunerative schemes. What I want to ensure is that in each province the sources of water-supply best suited to it, whether they be canals, or tanks, or wells, shall be scientifically investigated and mathematically laid down, so that we may be presented with a continuous programme, which we may pursue in ordinary years as an insurance against the bad years when they come."

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Madras is a province which also possesses great irrigating capabilities, being watered by the Godavery, the Krishna, the Pennair, and the Cauvery which take their rise in the mountains of the western coast and flow across the Peninsula into the Bay of Bengal. Much has been done here already, but under Lord Curzon's fostering care a good deal more is being undertaken. One great project is for utilizing the water of the river Tungabadhra before it joins the Krishna. The land to be taken up for this purpose consists of about 120 square miles, the greater portion of which is situated in the territory of His Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad. It was regarding the acquisition of the land required for this purpose that H.E. Lord Ampthill recently visited Hyderabad in order to confer with His Highness' officials, with what results is not yet known. As to what has actually been done in the Presidency of Madras a reference to the last Irrigation Report will be of interest. The total amount spent on the various irrigation works during the year was Rs. 74,29,333, irrigating an area of 7,093,168 acres and yielding a revenue of Rs. 2,40,87,153. No less than Rs. 5,95,583 were spent in the investigation of new projects, of which there are twenty-two

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

in number. Many of these works are extremely remunerative to the Government as well as being a source of prosperity to the country. For instance the eight principal works at the Godavery, Krishna, Cauvery, Periyar, etc., on a total cost of Rs. 6,53,50,031 yield a net revenue (after paying for working charges) of Rs. 69,76,170 or more than 10 per cent. Seeing that the Government can borrow at 3½ per cent., there can be no difficulty in obtaining the necessary funds for any sound irrigation project, and Lord Curzon's aim has been to investigate, to estimate for, and to place on record every possible scheme which can tend to an increase of prosperity. Of course it will take years before the whole programme can be carried out, but it will be due to Lord Curzon's initiative that future Viceroys can never be at a loss to know of some productive enterprise which can be started when funds are available.

Connected with irrigation comes agriculture. During the last 7 years quite a new impulse has been given to the study of agricultural problems. Not only has a great agricultural college and institution been founded at Pusa, but in every Presidency there is now an agricultural department. Agricultural schools and experimental farms have

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

been established at various centres, new crops are being experimented with, and the people are being instructed as to the most productive manner of raising existing ones. The different kinds of manures are experimented with, and the results periodically published. A kind of wholesome rivalry has been raised in each Presidency as to which can show the best results in this respect. Of course time must elapse before the results of this experimental work can be utilised, but in the meantime it is due to Lord Curzon that a fresh impulse has been given in a much needed direction.

In a former chapter I have dwelt upon the increase of trade. This increase has been especially marked during the last five years and has occurred after the Currency regulations introduced by Lord Curzon in 1899-1900. These regulations were an endeavour to obtain a fixity of the exchange value of the rupee, for there is nothing that interferes more with the movements of trade than a fluctuating exchange. It can scarcely be said that the rupee has attained an absolute 'fixity' of value, and perhaps a better phrase to use would be 'stability'. This it has acquired in an eminent degree, and the way is now clear for a further advance by which

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

it will become permanently fixed at Rs. 15 for the sovereign. As a matter of fact, although the Government offices such as the Post Offices and Treasuries frequently make payments in gold at the rate of Rs. 15 for the sovereign, the actual exchange rate for mercantile transaction fluctuates between Rs. 15 and 15-4-0, and is generally the latter. The exchange is certainly more stable but it is not fixed.

The interest which Lord Curzon has shown in India has not been confined to political problems, but has extended also to the historic remains of former dynasties. Soon after his arrival he made a speech to the Asiatic Society of Bengal in February 1900, in which, amongst other things, he said :—

"India is covered with the visible records of vanishing dynasties of forgotten monarchs, of persecuted and sometimes dishonoured creeds. These monuments are for the most part, though there are notable exceptions, in British territory and on soil belonging to Government. Many of them are in out-of-the-way places, and are liable to the combined ravages of a tropical climate, an exuberant flora, and very often a local and ignorant population, who see only in an ancient building

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

the means of inexpensively raising a modern one for their own convenience. All these circumstances explain the peculiar responsibility that rests upon government in India."

He went on to define his own purpose as follows :—

"I hope to assert more definitely during my time the Imperial responsibility of Government in respect of Indian antiquities, to inaugurate or to persuade a more liberal attitude on the part of those with whom it rests to provide the means, and to be a faithful guardian of the priceless treasure-house of art and learning that has, for a few years at any rate, been committed to my charge."

This is another of the promises held out which has been amply redeemed. The annual reports submitted by the Experts employed in each Province in Archæology and Epigraphy show how carefully the country is being searched for the relics of former times, for inscriptions and for copper-plates which can throw more light upon ancient history. Two works may be specially mentioned which are due to Lord Curzon's personal initiative. The restoration of the windows of the Ahmadabad Mosque to their original

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

design and the restoration of some of the splendid buildings at Delhi and Agra and Sikri. Those who saw the Taj and its barren approach ten years ago would be astonished at the change which has been made in its environment. This priceless pearl of beauty is now to be seen in a proper setting. But Lord Curzon has not only been interested in the preservation of ancient buildings from ruin, he has also endeavoured to give a stimulus to Indian Art Manufactures in which the former skill seemed in danger of dying out. It was with this object in view that in connection with the Delhi Durbar he organized an exhibition of Indian Arts which is to form a permanent feature and institution. His reasons for this can be best given in his own words in the speech that he made on September 5, 1902, at the Legislative Council, in which he justified the cost of this great historical pageant :—

"I have, as is known, endeavoured still further to utilise the opportunity in a practical spirit, by arranging for a great Exhibition of Indian Art Manufactures to be held at Delhi at the same time. I confidently assure the public that they will be greatly astonished at the range, the variety, and the beauty of this exhibition. Whether it is true

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

that the old Indian arts are being killed by European competition, a charge that is frequently brought by those who do not make the smallest effort to keep them alive themselves, or whether they are perishing from this apathy, or whether India merely provides, as I suspect, an illustration of a world-wide law, the fact remains that the process of extinction has not been carried nearly so far as many suppose, and that artificers still exist in India, even in these days of commercial ideals and debauched taste, who are capable of satisfying the demand for the artistic and beautiful and rare, if such a demand there be. I cannot pretend by a single exhibition to create it; but if it already be in existence, as I cannot but think, though perhaps dormant and abashed, then we may do a good deal by an opportunity such as this to revive and stimulate it, for we shall, I hope, both advertise to the world what we are capable of turning out, and also, which is much more important, encourage the aptitudes and educate the taste of our own people."

Whilst I am on this subject I may mention that since I copied the above extract, there has been put into my hands the last report of the Archæological Survey of Madras and Coorg for 1904-05. I am

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

not going to deal with it here, but I wish to quote one passage which shows the far-reaching sympathy of the Government of India whilst under Lord Curzon's rule, in regard to buildings of ancient and historical interest.

"Proposals were submitted for an expenditure of about Rs. 24,000 in the official year 1904-05. But a memorandum on the Conservation of Ancient Monuments in the Madras Presidency was prepared by Mr. Marshall, the Director-General of Archæology in India, which was forwarded by the Government of India for the information of the Government of Madras, requesting that the annual allotment might be increased to at least Rs. 35,000 per annum. The Government of India added that the monuments selected for conservation should not be limited to the arbitrary number of 100, but that the list should depend upon the importance of the monuments." Surely I was right, when in the first chapter I paraphrased the epitaph with the words: "He touched everything, and upon everything left his mark." A writer on Napoleon once said that his mind was like a bureau with an infinite number of drawers. Whatever subject was raised, he touched as it were the spring of the drawer which flew open and

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

disclosed its contents. When finished it closed with a snap, and another drawer opened with the same result. Each drawer was complete and each one was kept carefully separate from the other. It is the same with Lord Curzon. At one moment his mind and attention seems to be entirely taken up by some special subject, say education or famine, and he applies to its mastery the whole of his ability and powers. But let the office door open and admit the head of another department, say of Fine Arts or of Archæology, and the drawer is shut to with a snap, another opens, and from it is produced a fresh store of facts and information to which he is anxious to add.

31734

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

CHAPTER VIII.

OTHER REFORMS—CIVIL SERVICE; REPORT WRITING; "EFFICIENCY"; TELEGRAPHIC AND POSTAL CHARGES; PASSENGER TRAFFIC AND AGRICULTURAL INDEBTEDNESS.

ALL of the subjects cited at the heading to this chapter were alluded to by Lord Curzon in his Budget Speech of 1901 (in addition to those which I have already discussed) as those in which reform was required. It was the interest which he had in the welfare of the people that induced him to take them up, for every one of these reforms is intimately associated, in a greater or less degree, with their well-being.

The result of the old leave rules of the Civil Service was that the administrative staff of each district was in a continual state of change. But it is impossible for the few Civilians in the higher branches of the service to properly administer a district with which they are not intimately acquainted. Constant change means a loss of touch

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

between the rulers and the ruled. Individuality is still a great factor in the successful administration of India. It requires time to produce that confidence on behalf of the people without which a foreign rule cannot possibly be a success. It also requires time for a Collector of a District to become acquainted with the conditions and requirements of the little kingdom which is placed under his charge, and for which he is answerable to the Government. Under the former system it frequently happened that after a year, or even a few months only, the Civil officer was sent to another district where everything had to be begun over again. This has now been altered. An element of permanency has been introduced, which was wanting before, with the result that there has been a marked improvement, not only in the district administration but also in the comfort of the officers themselves. It was with the same object in view that Lord Curzon found it necessary to curtail the growing tendency to indulge in lengthy reports, the composition of which occupied the greater part of the District Officer's time, and prevented him from exercising the personal supervision which is so essential. As years have passed a great change has taken place in this respect. Fifty or sixty

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

years ago the District Collector ruled his people and the country in a more or less patriarchal manner. His decisions were considered final, and few dreamed of appealing against them. This primitive state of affairs, however, had become changed. Not only had the people become more enlightened and litigious, but a host of new subjects had cropped up regarding which the Collector was called upon to report, so that his time was almost entirely occupied in clerical work. Lord Curzon's order reducing the number of reports and diminishing their bulk has been felt to be a much desired relief. In his own words "the real tyranny to be feared in India is not tyranny by the Executive Authority, but by the pen." No doubt this change has been resented by some, who, trained up in an atmosphere of report, had made it their business. To them it was a labour of love, and they hoped to write themselves into favour and promotion. To them it was unwelcome that reports should consist of merely the bare outlines of the year's work, and they felt aggrieved to find that a report which had formerly taken weeks to compile and contained a ream of paper, should be now cut down to a few pages of letter-press and statistics, whilst others were abolished entirely.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

But the best class of officers welcomed the change, and it has most certainly had the effect of increasing the efficiency of administration—"Efficiency" is the great keystone to the whole of Lord Curzon's work in India. In his last utterance at the Simla Club, whilst paying a noble tribute to the colleagues and officials who had rendered it possible for him to carry out the many reforms that he has inaugurated, he said that he had read in a native newspaper which had bitterly attacked him that: "As for Lord Curzon he cares for nothing but efficiency" and his Lordship went on to say "But I hardly think that when *I* am gone this an epitaph of which I need feel greatly ashamed." We all know the saying of "Heaven preserve me from my friends," but in this respect Lord Curzon might well exclaim: "I thank Heaven for my enemies." The case for the prosecution must be a very bad one if one of the indictments is that the accused made efficiency the ideal to be aimed at. In this same speech the Viceroy gave an admirable example of a system which he has endeavoured to reform, and I may say with eminent success:

"There were three respects in which a short experience taught me that a higher level of

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

efficiency under our administration was demanded. The first was in the despatch of business. Our methods were very dignified, our procedure very elaborate and highly organised, but the pace was apt to be the reverse of speedy. I remember in my first year settling a case that had been pursuing the even tenor of its way without, as far as I could ascertain, exciting the surprise or ruffling the temper of an individual for 61 years. I drove my pen like a stiletto into its bosom. I buried it with exultation and I almost danced upon the grave. Gentlemen, I really think that not merely the new rules that we have adopted, but the new principles that are at work, have done a good deal to assist the despatch of business, and I hope that there may not be any backsliding or relapse in the future. It was one of John Lawrence's sayings that procrastination is the thief of efficiency as well of time, and though I would not say that an administration is good in proportion to its pace, I would certainly say that it cannot be good if it is habitually and needlessly slow. Our second object was the overhauling of our existing machinery which had got rusty and had run down. There is scarcely a department of the Government or a branch of the service which we have not, during

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

the last few years, explored from top to bottom, improving the conditions of service where they were obsolete or inadequate, formulating a definite programme of policy or action, and endeavouring to raise the standard and the tone. And, thirdly, we had to provide new machinery to enable India to grapple with new needs. Perhaps there is nothing which the public has shown so general an inability to understand, as the fact that a new world of industry and enterprise and social and economic advance is dawning upon India. New continents and islands leap above the horizon, as they did before the navigators of the Elizabethan age. But if I am right, if agriculture and irrigation and commercial industry have unknown futures before them, then Government, which in this country is nearly everything, must be ready with the appliances to enable it to shape and to direct these new forms of expansions. You cannot administer India according to modern standards but on the old lines. Some people talk as though when we create new departments and posts we are merely adding to the burden of Government. No, we are doing nothing of the sort. The burden of Government is being added to by tendencies and forces outside of ourselves,

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

which we are powerless to resist, but not powerless to control. We are merely providing the mechanism to cope with them."

I trust I shall be pardoned for reproducing so long an extract from a speech which must be fresh in the minds of many of my readers, but it is a point of such importance to the country and is so essential towards the forming of a proper estimate of Lord Curzon's policy during his term of Government that it deserves to be rescued from the ephemeral existence of a newspaper report. It has sometimes been made a matter of reproach to Lord Curzon that he is a hard task master. This is only to be expected from a man who sets before him so high an ideal, but no one will deny the truth of his remark that "I have never imposed upon others a burden which I was not willing to accept myself." It may be said with truth that whenever Lord Curzon has asked for eight annas in the shape of work, he has himself given freely one rupee. And he has always been ready to recognize and reward those who came up to his standard of efficiency. Lord Curzon might well exclaim in the words of the epitaph: "If you seek for a monument look around." He leaves India with every department

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

in a far higher state of efficiency than he found it, and the practical results of that efficiency are to be found in the increase of prosperity in every direction.

I will allude cursorily to the great benefits that have resulted not only to trade but also to the social comfort of the people in the reductions that have been made in the postal and telegraphic rates. These are matters which come home to everybody, to merchants as well as to private individuals. But the desire to introduce these reforms was caused by a keen sympathy with the wants of the people. The same may be said of the proposed improvement in the 3rd class passenger arrangements for railway travelling. It is the interests of the great voiceless bulk of the people that Lord Curzon thinks of. It is more or less a thankless task, for being voiceless the people cannot respond. Their appreciation will be found in the future results. But such appreciation must necessarily be slow, and the great majority of the people will require time before it can understand the advantages and benefits that have been conferred. In the meantime there is always a voiceful minority that is clamorous in its denunciations whenever it considers that its interests, which are

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

opposed to those of the voiceless majority, are attacked. But I maintain that if every measure of Lord Curzon's administration is analysed, it will be found that the principle at the bottom has been the good of the majority. I will not pretend to say—and probably Lord Curzon would himself hesitate to say—that everything is perfect. There can be no such thing as perfection in human affairs. Modification will, no doubt, be required in many matters, but perfection is what has been aimed at, and even though some of the shots may have fallen short of the high aim, they will still be higher than those aimed at mediocrity. This is an axiom which will surely be admitted by those of a growing class of our population—the "failed B.A.'s."

The problem of agricultural indebtedness is one which unfortunately Lord Curzon leaves unsolved. It has occupied much of his most anxious time and consideration, and various experiments have been made, notably in the matter of agricultural banks, the results of which must be left to the future to determine. That with the increase of wealth there is also an increase of poverty is, I think, undoubted. In a former chapter I have already alluded to this subject, and I therefore need say

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

nothing more beyond expressing my opinion that the one is the necessary and natural result of the other. In course of time the remedy will find itself, and the prospect arises in the increase of trade and manufactures to which Lord Curzon's policy has given an initial impetus. When, instead of denouncing the investment of foreign capital in India, the voiceful minority impresses upon the hoarders of the millions of pounds that are annually absorbed by India, like the waters of a useful river in the sands of an Indian desert, that they would do well to put out their capital in industrial enterprises, the remedy will perhaps be found, but until that time comes, any change for the better will probably be slow. The hereditary curse of centuries is not to be removed in the period of one Viceroyalty, even though it be as active an one as Lord Curzon's. But the commencement has been made, and there are many men left in the country imbued by his spirit of perseverance against all obstacles, who may be trusted to carry the work through.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

CHAPTER IX.

CONCLUSION.

It seems scarcely necessary that I should do more than allude to the great Coronation Durbar at Delhi, or to the magnificent memorial which is being erected at Calcutta to the memory of the great Empress of India. The one was a historical event which will long live in the memories of the people, and was a pageant well calculated to create a deep and lasting impression on the minds of the people of India. There are, of course, not wanting those who say that it was a needless expenditure of money, but the opinion is not shared by the majority of the people in whose hearts the love of an Imperial display still survives. This is what Lord Curzon himself said in a speech delivered shortly before the Durbar was held: "Personally I deprecate the tendency to apply to every act of State, great or small, the sordid test of its actual equivalent in price in annas and rupees"; and again: "There are some who were in all sincerity

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

when they made the contention that, desirable and even necessary as the function may be, the public money should not be needlessly squandered upon it. This plea seems to me to be so reasonable that I propose to give to it the answer that it deserves. It emanates, I think, from two classes of persons—from those who think that no money ought to be spent at Delhi at all while parts of India are suffering from drought or scarcity, and from those who are anxious that while some money is spent it should not be too much. I will deal with the first class first. A few weeks ago it is true that we were in the greatest anxiety and trepidation as to what might be in store for us in Gujerat, in parts of the Deccan, in Ajmer, and in portions of the Central Provinces and the Punjab; but I can truthfully say that the reports of the past three weeks show that it will not be necessary to take, from the public purse, a single anna that would otherwise be consecrated to the service of the poor. They have the first claim upon our consideration, and that claim we should regard as an obligation of honour to discharge.

"Then there is the second class of critics who recognise that the Durbar must cost something, but are apprehensive lest it should be run on too

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

exorbitant a scale. I am old enough to remember that the same criticism was rife at the time of Lord Lytton's assemblage in the autumn of 1876. Famine was at that time abroad in the land, and loud were the denunciations both in the Indian press and even in Parliament at home of his alleged extravagance and folly, and yet I have seen calculations made by Lord Lytton which show, that when all recoveries had been made, the net cost to India of the Delhi assemblage was only £50,000 and of the entire rejoicings throughout India, Delhi included, £100,000. In one respect we are in a somewhat different position now. The assemblage of 1877 was an almost exclusively official assemblage. I have tried to gather at the impending Durbar representatives of all the leading classes of the community from every part of India. I want to make it a celebration not of officials alone but of the public. This means that we shall have at Delhi in the forthcoming winter larger camps, more guests, and as a consequence a greater outlay than in 1877. Quite apart from our own arrangements, the improvement in communications and the social progress that have taken place in the last twenty-five years will bring together a much larger concourse of

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

persons. Nearly every one would like to be present, and the number who will actually be present will be very large. All these features will tend to increase the scale of the proceedings. Notwithstanding these considerations, I desire to assure the public, who have a right to know, that the proposed arrangements are being run on strictly business-like and economical lines."

The above undertaking was certainly carried out to the letter, and it is only a very small minority that does not say that the money spent in bringing together the representatives of all the races in India to celebrate the Coronation of our august Emperor was not well spent.

As regards the Victoria memorial, it is perhaps premature to say anything now, as it is not yet completed, beyond that it has been planned and designed so as to be in every way worthy of the great Queen whose memory will for ever live in the hearts of the people. When finished in all its beauty, the country will owe it to Lord Curzon's unceasing care and supervision, for not even the slightest detail has been allowed to escape his attention, and it is right to add that when Her late Majesty was consulted regarding the form which a memorial to the Prince Consort should take, she

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

expressed her opinion that it should, if possible, be in the nature of a permanent memorial. It was therefore that Lord Curzon decided that the memorial to the Empress of the 19th century should again, if possible, be equal to that erected to the Empress of the 17th century.

I have now passed in review some of the chief features which have marked Lord Curzon's administration. I have shown what he promised and what he has performed. It is not my intention to deal with the last phase of his brilliant career, with the controversy which sent a thrill of surprise and regret throughout India. Into the merits of this controversy I will not presume to enter. In Lord Curzon's own words at the Simla Club dinner :—

"I do not stand here to-night to discuss the controversial topics; they will work out to their appointed issue by processes which we cannot discern, or at any rate cannot at present discern. History will write its verdict upon them with unerring pen, and we need not anticipate the sentence." But there is one point which I wish to emphasize which should ever be remembered by the people, and that is, that rather than be a party to a policy which—rightly or wrongly does not matter —Lord Curzon considered to be detrimental to the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

best interests of the country, he threw up his splendid position, and leaves India with the work he has so much at heart only partially completed. I would ask whether this is not another splendid proof of his devotion to, and of his sympathy with, the country? There is, I think, a sense of personal honour, and a feeling of unselfishness about such an act that must appeal to every one, whether he agrees with Lord Curzon's reasons or not. His whole career has been a constant devotion to the highest ideal of duty. Again, in his own recent words: "I stand as one who has laboured and wrought amongst you to the best of my ability, through these long and striving years," and truly his life during that time has been one of unceasing labour without one thought of self. Speaking at the same banquet at Simla Mr. Hewett said, with regard to the work necessitated by the Education Conference in 1901: "Having been behind the scenes at the time, I can assert without fear of contradiction, that the work which he then undertook was too much for any man, and that I have met no one in the country but Lord Curzon who would have attempted it." It is with this spirit that he has approached and dealt with every subject that has come before him, and this little book is but an imperfect record of how important and far-

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

reaching they have been. And what compensation does a Viceroy receive for such a life of incessant toil and anxiety? As Mr. Hewett said further on in his speech: "The life of a Viceroy is one of splendid isolation. He can make no friends, he can share no intimacies. In the troubles and anxieties which necessarily at times accumulate around him, he must turn for support to the members of his own family." Truly seven of the best years of a man's life spent in this atmosphere of "splendid isolation" are a heavy price to pay, even for the honours and dignities of a Viceroyalty, and the principal reward must always be the consciousness of having done his duty. The least that we, on whose behalf he has thus incessantly toiled, can do is to show him our gratitude and affection, and this I believe to be the feeling of the vast majority of men throughout India. Our sympathies will go with him across the sea, and we shall at all events have the satisfaction of knowing that there will be one distinguished man at home, familiar with every Indian problem, with her interests deeply rooted in his heart, who will be always ready to uphold her cause in the Councils of the Empire. And he will be accompanied by one who has stood by his side throughout this arduous career of duty; one whom Mr.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Hewett happily termed "a splendid comrade-in-arms," the only one to whom in times of anxiety he could turn for consolation. It is of this "splendid comrade" that Lord Curzon himself remarked that "the part which India fills in the memory and affections of Lady Curzon is not inferior to that which she fills in my own, and when we have left this country my heart will not alone be left behind, but a considerable portion of hers will be here also." I repeat what I said in the opening chapter that I believe I am voicing the feelings of the country generally, and of Mahomedans in particular, when in bidding Lord and Lady Curzon "God-speed," we tender them our humble and grateful thanks for the inestimable benefits which, during their stay in India, they have been the means of bestowing upon the country; and if it be true, as we do not doubt, that a portion of *their* hearts will be left here, ours too will go out towards them, and we shall feel that the bond of union between us has not been severed, but like an elastic band has been merely stretched, so as to extend over a greater distance of sea and land. In remembering Lord Curzon the Indian people will always associate with him the aspiration so tersely expressed in his old school motto :

"*Floreat et florebit.*"

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

00031734

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Digitized with financial assistance from

on 16 November, 2018